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AFRICAN VIOLET MAGAZINE

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The African Violet Magazine

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If you have had any unusual or interesting experiences in growing St. Paulias, the Staff invites you to write an article for publication in the magazine.

DUES

You will be notified when your membership fee is due.

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COVER DESIGN: PURPLE BEAUTY

Purple Beauty has dark shining green foliage somewhat similar to the fonage of Neptune though it has a more pointed leaf, and is not quite as quilted.

It is as a rule flat growing and has huge blue-violet blossoms produced in clusters of 4-8 just at the top of the foliage. A heavy bloomer the bell shaped blossoms give the plant the appearance of a beautiful violet corsage.

MANY THANKS MR. CHARD.

Through an oversight the name of Mr. Arthur Chard was omitted from the illustration of the Glas-Wik watering article by Ethel T. Crisp in Volumn I Number III. The Staff wishes to express their special thanks to Mr. Chard for his contribution and for so generously sharing his talent at other times.

The Presidents Message

We Meet Again

Your Second Annual Convention has just been held. A notice of it, including a tentative schedule of events was sent all members of the Society. We sincerely hope many of you were able to attend. Cincinnati, Ohio was the Convention City this time. Thanks to our stalwart member in Cincinnati, Mrs. Arthur Radtke, the Cincinnati Club in that fine city was the location where all events of the Convention were staged.

A large number of you who could not attend entrusted three of your officers with your proxies. Certainly we pledge each one of you who did this that we used our very best judgment, and exercised every reasonable care in thus representing you in the considerations and actions that were taken at the Annual Business Meeting on May 22. The Sept. issue of the Magazine will bring you a faithful report on the action taken at this meeting and also the other interesting events of the Convention.

By the time you read this message our Membership Roll will have reached the 1,200 mark. It is already well over 1,000 in number. Many of you responded generously, I know, to the suggestion in my last message that each member at that time secure one or more of their interested friends to join the Society. Let us continue this effective recruiting mission until our mutual efforts have reached clear around the ever widening circle of enthusiastic African Violet growers throughout the Country.

My last message to you mentioned the pressing need for the Society to set up a Committee on Registration to work side-by-side with our Classification Committee in working out and setting in motion a sound plan through which the known varieties and species of African Violets can be properly registered, by name, with the Society. The great need for this kind of constructive program, to operate in the prevention of duplication of both names and varieties, has become more apparent. This action was one of the main additions to our program considered at the convention in Cincinnati.

Please always feel free to write any or all of your officers and Committee chairmen your suggestions as to how the Society can improve its services. Your suggestions will be sincerely appreciated.

Cordially,

Your President,

Mrs. O. E. Keller

AFRICAN VIOLET STILL QUEEN OF INDOOR PLANTS

BY MRS. GEORGE F. PENDLETON

From a Handbook for African Violet Growers by Mary Margaret Odom

There Are Various Ways of Handling "the Violet That Is Not a Violet," but Here Is the Practice of a Kansas City Gardener in Her Hobby.

(Mrs. Pendleton has written before on the African Violet, but now brings growers up to date on her practices. "There are many successful ways of raising African Violets, perhaps all equally good" she comments, "here I shall tell you the way I raise mine, not as a commercial grower, but as a housewife with a hobby.")

Of course you know the African violet, or Saintpaulia, is really not a violet. It was named for Baron Walter von St. Paul, who discovered it in East Africa in 1890. It was found in wooded areas in limestone, in humid forests among granite rock, under waterfall ledges and in the shade of the undergrowth. This gives one a fair insight into what the African violet likes in the way of light and moisture.

The African violet belongs to the gesneria family, in which the color yellow does not occur, so it has been said, therefore, that there could never be a yellow saintpaulia. But some of the side branches of the gesneria family do carry yellow, and with so many interested persons working feverishly in cross pollination we may yet have one.

African violets are not hard to raise if one understands their few requirements. In the winter they can bask for a short time in the early morning sun, preferably, a few feet from an east window. The remainder of the day they require good protection from direct sunlight but revel in all possible light a room affords. It matters not from which direction the light comes the remainder of the day so long as the direct rays of the sun do not strike the plant. Light and good light makes strong, sturdy plants.

Early fall is the preferred time for transplanting.

They Knew Warm Rains.

Watering seems to be the greatest bugaboo for most people. Experience alone can solve that problem and once one acquires the knack, it is anything but difficult. Always keep the water tepid so as not to shock them out of several months' growth. I water from below, not that I think it cannot be done from above, but why run the risk of causing crown rot? If the topsoil is damp the water has distributed itself all through the soil.

When the topsoil is no longer damp the plant needs water again. Most of my pots are the 3-inch size, and under each one I place a small glass sauce dish. I find that about one-fourth cup of water is sufficient for each watering. Always water in the morning as the temperature rises.

Photo by Ross Hahn

Double Duchess

Only occasionally do I set the pots on wet sand or gravel, for sooner or later plants so treated may acquire two much moisture and eventually rot, especially in hot, damp weather. I find this method an open road to trouble.

It makes no difference how much water gets on the leaves so long as the sun does not shine on them while wet. In fact, a shower is often beneficial.

When Leaves Fall.

It is perfectly natural for a matured plant to shed a few of its lower leaves, especially in summer. If it loses a large number the plant probably is getting too much water. An African violet does not grow up out of the soil, but stays where you put it. It does grow up from above the soil and as it sheds its leaves it developes a long bent stem. The top may be broken off and re-rooted to form a new plant, but a still better plant results from the propagation of a new leaf.

Soil is important, and yet one does not actually need to measure it cup for cup. Roughly speaking, a light soil with plenty of humus and a little sand is all the African violet needs. But here, for those who wish to know, are the proportions I use: three parts good garden loam, three parts humus in the form of leaf mold with some well rotted cow manure and peat-moss added; one part sand and a teaspoon of bonemeal to each 3-inch pot. I sift this through a 1/4-inch wire mesh. Anything finer makes the soil too fine and compact for the very small roots to penetrate easily. Leafmold from under a privet hedge and woods soil are excellent.

I place a bit of spagnum moss over the hole of the pot just to keep the soil from sifting through. It also serves slightly in maintaining moisture. I do not use broken pottery in the bottom as it hinders absorption of the water in the sauce dish.

Feeding is not absolutely necessary if the soil is excellent, but it does produce larger and better flowers with good color. Any well balanced fertilizer is adequate. Use one level teaspoon to a quart of water in the sauce dish in the same manner as for watering. Weak manure tea is always good. According to many authorities B-1 is of no value. Feeding every three weeks is ample.

A 15-Degree Range.

The ideal temperature for African violets is between 60 degrees and 75 degrees. Temperatures lower than 60 degrees will cause the plants to stop growth. A white, narrow line around the edge of a leaf or curling of the leaf are often the result of being too cold. Temperatures higher than 75 degrees, because of heat and dryness, cause the buds to drop or flowers to wilt. Many plants kept together will tend to form moisture to counteract this condition.

Ordinarily African violets are free from diseases. The most common pest is the white, woolly, mealy bug, which looks like a bit of cotton sprinkled over the plant. To eradicate it wrap a piece of cotton on the end of a toothpick dipped in alcohol and touch each bug with it.

If the plant curls in the center and the buds seem unable to entangle themselves you probably have cyclamen mite, so you might as well destroy your plant, as this mite is extremely difficult to treat.

African violets are easy to propagate from leaf cuttings. The best time for this is early spring. The most important step is knowing how to choose the best leaves to use. Do not choose the large, oldest ones lying on the rim of the pot. The very youngest are not the best either, but are preferable to the oldest. It is the in-between leaf that has life and vitality that almost always propagates.

I like placing a leaf in a small tumbler of water or a wide-mouthed bottle, one that holds the leaf up and keeps the end of the stem from touching the bottom. Some people fasten a piece of waxed paper or place a cardboard over a tumbler, and then insert the leaf through a hole made in it. For just a few leaves this works fine.

Into Sand and Peat

When the roots are about an inch long and before the little plants have been started, I take them out of the water and place them in half peat moss, heavily impregnated with vermiculite (the latter encourages a good root system). I put this mixture in clay bulb pans (flat flower pots) eight or ten inches in diameter. In the center of the pan I sink a 2½ or 3-inch, corked flower pot up to the rim and keep it filled with water, which gradually seeps through the porous pot and distributes the moisture more evenly than bottom or top watering. At times this method does not furnish enough moisture so more must be added to the surface of the sand as it must be kept damp at all times but not soaked.

When the little plants have become fair size, about one or one and one-half inches high, I remove the cluster, parent leaf and all, with a fork, shake off the excess sand mixture, but not too much, as the mass of roots should not be disturbed. I then plant the entire cluster in the prepared soil in a 3-inch pot. When the cluster has almost doubled its size I divide and put each little plant in a pot of its own. By then each plant has an excellent root system and does not mind the tearing apart at all. When there are a few very small plants in the cluster I either pot them in smaller pots or put them back in the sand to grow until large enough for the 3-inch pot. I usually leave the parent leaf on until this last transplanting unless it is hindering the development of the small plants or is deteriorating itself.

Photo by Ross Hahn

Red Head Girl

AFRICAN VIOLET STILL QUEEN OF INDOOR PLANTS.

I like a rather long stem for rooting so the leaf will not hinder the development of the small plants by shutting off light. A leaf with no stem at all is unsatisfactory because although small plants result, they grow up spindly because of lack of light from one side.

I have learned that leaves growing uncovered raise much sturdier plants. The only time I cover with glass is when I have a weak leaf inclined to wilt or one with a few roots that I am transferring from water to sand. I may cover these with a glass for several days as that seems to be sufficient to put them on their own.

Plants bloom much better when planted singly. They do not grow well in too small a pot when root-bound or in two large a pot, as there are not roots enough to use up the moisture readily, and crown rot may follow.

A Short Life Span.

The life of an African violet is not long, a plant 1 or 2 years old being at its prime. Plants 3 or more years old are not desirable to me.

There are so many varieties now that it is almost impossible to describe them all. Blue Boy, Blue Girl, Pink Beauty and White Lady are considered standard. Blue Girl is extremely popular because of its beautiful, deeply-scalloped edge and white triangle at the base of the leaf. We are now getting Pink Girl, Orchid Girl, Red Head Girl and Variegated Blue Girl, all with the same, deeply scalloped edge. Besides the new variegated leafed ones, we have several doubles, such as Double Orchid Beauty, Double Russian (flowers quite double), Double Blue Boy and Double Duchess, which I understand is the same as Double Blue Boy. Mine have not yet bloomed, so I do not speak from experience.

The Duponts perhaps are the most gorgeous of all. They have very thick, large, round, hairy leaves with extra large flowers, but are not so prolific as some varieties. They propagate slowly and sparingly. The lavender pink is especially lovely. There are also several shades of blue. Crinkles, Curley Special, Mrs. Boles, Marine, are much sought after. There are many, many more and even more coming as the propagators are developing hundreds of new seedlings. Maybe that yellow one will show up yet—who knows?

DISTRICT DIRECTORS

The following list of District Directors has been announced for 1948.

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Mrs. Arthur Radtke,
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Region 5. Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.
To be announced later.

Region 6. Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri and Kansas.

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NEMATODES IN AFRICAN VIOLETS

Alma Wright

Saintpaulia growers in many sections of the country are becoming painfully aware that one of the most serious threats to successful African Violet Culture is the root nematode. These Nematodes are fine thread like parasitic worms which attack the roots of the Violet plant, and cause it to wilt and die. Both the roots and plant stalk are attacked. Plants showing Nematode Symptoms lose their usual dark glossy green color. The foliage becomes pale and dull, and the outer leaves begin to be droopy. Small pulpy nodules or enlargements will be found on the roots, and the stalk will be knotty and spongy. Sometimes watering more frequently will encourage the plant to firm up for a short while, and if a careful search is made live or dead nematodes may be found in the bottom of the dish or jardinere a heavily infested plant has been kept in. Extra warm water will at times bring them out.

There is at present no known cure for a plant whose root system is infested with nematodes. Thus it is evident that the first thing a violet enthusiast should do when a plant is found to be infested and dying is to destroy it. Do not throw it in the trash or on the humus pile because the nematodes may survive, and find a new host. Destroy the plant and the soil, and carefully disinfect the pot before using it again. It is said to be possible that nematodes may pass from one pot to another if they are grouped close together on wet sand or gravel. They may also be able to swim in tepid or cold water from pot to pot if kept in a common container.

A plant having crown root rot or root rot may be cut away above the infected part of the stalk and re-rooted either by placing it in a glass of water until it has grown new roots or by re-rooting it in peat moss and vermiculite or some other medium. The same procedure however cannot be followed for a plant infested with nematodes. Re-rooting has proven to be a failure and a waste of time. The plant may be cut back to what appears to be healthy stalk. It may be re-rooted and several weeks pass before the nematodes reappear. Then the plant will most likely begin to have symptoms of the nematodes return. It will gradually lose color and become limp. As a rule the plant stalk which was apparently successfully re-rooted will be a spongy nematode mass, and the short roots again will be quite full of the little bumpy knots used by the nematodes as their home.

Photo by Ross Hahn

Preventing nematode infestation is the best way to get rid of them! Since the presence of nematodes cannot be detected in soil before it is used it is best to plant only in sterilized soil. This includes all types of animal fertilizers commonly added to potting soil which may have had the opportunity of becoming infested. A simple method for home sterilization is to place the soil to be sterilized in a collander or strainer and pour boiling water thru it or it may be baked in the oven for an hour at 200 degrees or higher stirring it from time to time so as to expose as much of the soil as possible to the highest degree of heat. Tobacco dust too has been recommended as checking the growth of nematodes in potting soil. Being used at the rate of one teaspoon to the gallon of good potting soil. A number of easy to use sterilized soil preparations are sold commercially under a variety of trade names. Also on the market are several soil sterilizing preparations which may be applied over a large garden area. Good results are claimed and if these are justified a most important contribution has been made to all home gardeners who have to struggle with Nematodes in their soil.

NEMATODES

By C. J. Hudson, Jr.

There has been much comment within the past year or two about a new menace to practically all types of plant growth which has seriously effected the culture of the plants, both in home gardens and among potted plant groups. This is known as the Root-Knot or Nematode which causes a swollen growth on the roots, making the roots distorted and knotty and causing the ultimate destruction of the plants.

The Nematode which causes all of this trouble is a minute worm that infests many types of soil and it also feeds upon root systems of plants. It is so small that it can easily burrow into the fine root hairs of growing plants and through its feeding action will cause the stoppage of the vessels which carry food from the roots to the plant tops. This swelling will eventually cut off the entire food supply from the root systems resulting in the death of the plants.

Nematode injury is usually determined by the action of the effected plants when they apparently begin to die down as though suffering from lack of moisture although there is plenty of moisture available to these plants. If such injury is suspected it can be definitely determined by examining the roots for a swollen and knotty condition. Plants that are badly effected can not be treated with any reasonable degree of success but should be destroyed and burned.

There is one definite control for the Nematode, and the nature of treatment depends a great deal upon the amount of soil to be treated. If large amounts are to be treated greenhouse people will usually sterilize the soil with steam, the temperature being high enough to completely destroy the Nematode organisms. Others will use boiling hot water when smaller amounts of soil are to be treated, such as a small quantity which is used for potting plants.

Among the latest and most effective and permanent treatments for Nematode infested soils is that of fumigating the ground with one or the other of the new standard Sul-fumigants. One of these is sold under the name of Dowfume. Both of these methods are very effective and will completely rid the soil of Nematodes for a long period of time. They are both liquids and are injected into the soil so that the liquid will penetrate the entire area and thus kill the Nematodes through the fumes.

As to definate methods of treating soils, it would be wise to contact local state experiment stations where special experiments have been conducted in the treatment of greenhouse soils and also for treatment under out-of-door gardening conditions.

There has been a great deal of discussion recently about a so-called Foliar Nematode which has been said to attack the leaves of African Violets. Leading entomologists have repeatedly discounted the fact that such a type of Nematode exists and say that there is only one type that attacks plants and that is the one just described which attacks only root systems. The remedy suggested for the control of Foliar Nematodes also seemed to be erroneous because the general recommendations were that plants should be sprayed with a copper solution. A copper being a fungicide would have little insecticide value.

Fortunately Nematodes and Root-Knot can be controlled in any of the ways mentioned, and it would pay any African Violet grower to first treat his soil to be definitely sure that these infestations will not occur in his plants.

FUNDAMENTALS IN JUDGING

By: Mrs. Arthur Radtke

This article is being written as a suggestion to those Regional and local African Violet Society Chapters who will soon be staging their own shows. To date, there have been but few flower conventions that have specialized solely in Saintpaulias. The two largest have both been held in Atlanta: Nov. 8-9, 1946 and Oct. 9-10, 1947. The latter of course, you recognize as having been our first annual National affair. Having had the honor bestowed upon me, to officiate in such an important event - I would like to pass on to the public, in my opinion, the most important duties of a judge.

A copy of the schedule should be sent to the judges prior to the show. And the ordinary points of ethics and conduct, as in regular flower contests are observed. A good policy is not to have the names of the judges announced beforehand. As occasionally it is a temptation irresistible to some exhibitors not to 'play up' to preferences of certain judges - should these little whims become known to the public. Tho' the names of the judges should be published afterward and indicates to some extent, the standard of the show. Neither should the judges enter the exhibition room until all details have been completed.

Clerks are assigned to act as assistants to the judges, and they are previously instructed regarding their duties. They should be thoroughly familiar with the rules, schedule, classes and the number of entries in each division. They assume taking messages, opening envelopes, placing either the seals or ribbons, and keep the record of all prize-winners. The clerks are not allowed to exhibit in the classes that they are working with and are not permitted to indicate their choice. The judges, clerks and the chairman of the judges' or of the Flower Show Committee are supposedly to be the only people on the floor while judging is going on.

First, he or she must be fair, unbiased and have absolutely no intimation as to whose entries are being selected. The Show Committee will have so arranged the plants and entrants' names so that they wil be unidentifiable until after the judging has been completed. Then, the name of the exhibitor is displayed and the card on the plants winning the merits, will have attached either the seal or ribbon.

Usually a maximum of three ribbons are awarded in each class; an award for the Best plant in the show and one for the Largest. At our National Show there was a Sweekstake prize too, given to the exhibitor winning on the greatest number of points. To further stimulate interest, I advise recording "Honorable Mention' on the tags of plants that are deserving of this compliment. Or, if plants are barred from competition for my reason, the cause of "Disqualification" should be written on the exhibitor's entry card. To merit a blue ribbon, a plant must be credited with 90 or more points; red ribbon, 80 to 89; and a yellow, at least 70. The decision of the judges should be accepted as final. And, upon completion they are expected to sign their reports before turning them in. It is well to remember too, that Judges do not participate in the giving of awards in any class, where they have their own plant exhibited.

A most confusing factor in judging is the matter of 'crowns'. I was particularly delighted when I learned that the entries of Single-crown and Multiple-crown plants were going to be classified separately. Our first National Show, set a very fair example in having two classes of the latter. Number 9, was composed of "Collections"; the best of 3 to 5 un-named varieties. While number 10, dealt with the "Single Specimen". And the best individual plant of any named or un-named variety was judged for size, symmetry, and quantity of bloom.

In dividing the 100 points for a perfect plant, I believe the figures used at our first National Show are quite fair.

(a) Leaf Pattern ..... 35 points
(b) Quantity of Bloom ..... 20 points
(c) Size of Bloom ..... 10 points
(d) Color ..... 10 points
(e) Condition ..... 25 points

The basis on which ribbons are awarded should, naturally, be announced when entries are invited. On the standard that all single and multiple-crown plants will be kept separate and that the entries are divided into classes of recognizable varieties - the judging becomes comparatively simple.

(a) Leaf pattern is the most important, as this includes plant symmetry.

(b) Quantity of Bloom is easily decided, as in close decisions the open blossoms may be counted.

(c) Size of Blooms is a comparison of the physical dimensions of the flowers.

(d) Color - this may prove a little difficult due to the various exposures that the plants have been growing in, and the kind and amount of fertilizer they have been accustomed to. It is necessary that the judges be thoroughly familiar with the true colors of every established variety.

(e) Condition. This is of utmost importance, second only to leaf pattern. Violets must be carefully examined and only the healthy ones be allowed to compete. Plants that are either infested or diseased are dis-

FUNDAMENTALS IN JUDGING

qualified. Spotted foliage (other than when it is not a variegated plant) can also cause unfavorable comment. But it is for the protection of the exhibitors in general that these inspections are so rigid.

In conclusion, may I make another suggestion to inexperienced, but prospective exhibitors? For best leaf pattern and a symmetrical plant, turn, to promote even growth on all sides. Remove all soft, or browning foliage. And keep your plant fresh by occasionally removing particles of dust via spraying - of course using tepid water. Your plants will love the bath and show their gratitude.

Buds are not considered as flowers, so my parting reminder is to KEEP YOUR VIOLETS COLORFUL! For a plant without blooms otherwise perfect, is not worthy of being groomed to be displayed in any flower show. It is with eager anticipation that I shall look forward to the progress of our newly formed Chapters and I hope that the violets entered, with our ever-increasing knowledge, will eventually become perfect specimens.

HINTS ON LEAF PROPAGATION

By Rosa Peters

I have received the second issue of The African Violet Magazine, and have found it very interesting and helpful.

As an amateur, I have had wonderful results in propagating leaves, and would like to submit my method to the interested.

I propagate all leaves in 2 inch pots, which are then packed into a large, shallow clay pot. The pots I use hold 12 of the 2 inch pots, but any size pot can be used to fit ones need. A piece of pottery is placed over the drainage of both the large and small pots. The large pot being filled with a coarse sand, and for this I use our Lake Michigan Beach sand, as it keeps the small pots free of any mould formation.

The leaves are planted and moistened well before being packed into the large pot, packing the small pots so the tops are flush with the top of the large pot, the large pot is then placed into a basin of warm water until the beach sand is wet. From then on I see that the sand in the large pot is always quite moist, (always by setting large pot in a basin of water when needed). The soil in the small pots is always moist but not wet.

I am a sincere believer in sterile soil and clean pots.

I use a soft soil, (one that will not pack) and peat mixture with some of the beach sand for drainage. The soil is made sterile by steaming for 30 minutes and then screened.

I feel a leaf should be given a chance to live by being placed in a clean pot, and we never know what trouble can be stored in a used pot, so if I am re-using pots, they are well cleaned and placed in a disinfective (a Semesan solution) and if the pots are new, they are soaked in water for two or three days but still go into the Semesan solution.

After I have used all these precautions I am ready to plant my leaves, feeling I have been fair to both the leaf and the party that sold the leaf to me.

I know I have been rewarded as I have realized two and three plantings from each leaf.

One would think after three plantings a leaf would be deteriorated, but not so, the method and conditions must have been about right as when the leaves are discarded they were still a healthy, lovely looking leaf but no more petiole.

I started this method June 1947 and to date I have my first leaf to lose. A fair percentage don't you think?

I also have another fascinating hobby that I feel pays dividends, and that is keeping records of all leaves from their first planting till discarded. Example.

BLUE VELVET — planted Sept. 27 — Soil (on the acid side) and peat mixture — beach sand for drainage. Plantlet appeared in 5 weeks.

BLUE VELVET — replanted Nov. 21 — Soil (sweet) and peat mixture and beach sand for drainage, but using Rootone on the petiole for root stimulance, plantlet appeared in 4 weeks and 4 days, beating its own record by 3 days.

I have found since using the later, its the better of the two.

At the present I have about 125 plantlets which would take a lot of time and care, but as the plantlet leaves the propagating pot, it goes onto a tray on which I have placed charcoal and again the beach sand, keeping the beach sand real moist but not too wet until spring when I will repot into 3 inch pots.

AFRICAN VIOLET SEED

Mixed seed from crosses of many varieties. Packages of approximately 800 seeds, $1.00. Special crosses ready in October.

FRIENDLY GARDENS

New Bedford, Penna.

MY FAVORITE DOZEN

Esther E. Schadewald

If I were asked to show twelve different varieties of African Violets, I would take into consideration the following:

1. The appeal to the beginner by showing easy to recognize, named varieties.

2. Use of husky, mature plants.

3. Wide color range and abundance of bloom.

4. Unusual containers which would make the violets outstanding in competition with other house plants on display.

I would choose Amethyst, Mentor Boy, Blue Eyes, Red Ionantha, Blue Boy, du Pont Lavender Pink, du Pont Blue, Bi Color, Blushing Maiden, White Lady, Blue Girl, and Orchid Lady.

There are many other varieties for the experienced collector to choose such as the Doubles, Curly Special, Orchid Flute, Pink Girl, Gorgeous, and Trilby, but I think I would choose those which were easiest to obtain by the novice. This idea would probably bring many new members to the African Violet Society. Larger membership would mean more shows in local communities.

I would show the long wiry stemmed varieties, such as Amethyst and Mentor boy, because a single plant of either of these varieties would be of sufficient color and stamina to grace any window sill. The plum shaded hue of Mentor Boy reflects handsomely in the sunlight.

I would add Blue Eyes as my offering of the nearest coloring to baby blue.

By contrast, I would include the maroon blooms of Red Ionantha.

Blue Boy must never be omitted. It can be depended upon in advance of any show for its profusion of blooms. It appeals to beginners because it is comparatively easy to propagate.

Anyone who has the du Pont varieties will admire the heavy beefsteak appearance of their foliage. While they are not profuse bloomers, their blooms are certainly worth waiting for. Their flowers are huge and rich in coloring.

A good Bi Color would be my challenge for shading. Plum colored tips on the two upper petals are a beautiful contrast to the pale orchid coloring of the rest of the bloom.

The delicate pink tint of the white blooms of Blushing Maiden (formerly called Blushing Lady) and the snowy white flowers of White Lady are a delight to any visitor.

Blue Girl foliage is of great interest because of the deeply scalloped leaf with the white spot at its base. Its blooms are a handsome, intense blue.

Finally, I would add a pet of mine, an Orchid Lady, because it is a profuse bloomer of the truest orchid shade. In winter time, it will bloom equally well in a northern, southern, eastern, or western exposure - it makes no difference - and can be depended upon to adorn the window sill of any room in my home.

Photo by Ross Hann

du Pont Lavender Pink

For containers, I would use Pennsylvania Dutch pottery; maybe a large pitcher, decorated tobacco jar, or even a plant jardiniere if it was unusual in coloring or shape. A large fish bowl may be used for young flowering violet plants if other small indoor garden plants and mosses are added to complete the picture.

I hope, in the near future, that many of us may be able to enter our violet plants in nearby flower shows. I know I will do my best to encourage the hobby of collecting African Violets among my friends and acquaintances in our community.

Photo by Ross Hahn

Amethyst

MY FAVORITE DOZEN

Gladys Canner

For me, the du Pont Lavender Pink has always been a bit shy on blooms, but it is one of my favorites. Just one bloom stalk with its large orchid-pink blossoms is something to remember.

Ruffles, I like for it's beautiful ruffled (like the name implies) dark foliage which is so dark that under a certain light it seems almost black.

There is something about Bi-color that reminds me of old hand-painted china and I like the heavy lush foliage too.

Neptune, I include in this list for its dark glossy foliage, reddish underneath and the lovely lavender purple blooms which seem to lay all over the plant.

Now, I feel that Mentor Boy is one of my best all around good plants. The dark green leaves have such a healthy look and there is always an abundance of the large deep purple blossoms. Perhaps, tho' in this paragraph - I shall not make a preference between Mentor Boy and Blue Boy, which we are all so very familiar with. The latter, being such a prolific bloomer, makes Blue Boy an ideal favorite, a real stand by with many and a very difficult one to beat!

For a bright spot in your window try putting Red Head along side of Pink Beauty. They just seem to do something for each other. (My Pink Beauty is a deep pink, almost red in the center. Some I have seen have been a very pale pink - but of course, light, soil and fertilizer may cause the difference in color). Red Head I liked the minute I saw it. Would like to find a plant that would keep its rich wine-red shade as this violet first has, when its petals unfurl.

Perhaps this sounds unbelievable, but about two and a half years ago, I had a plant of lonantha, long stemed variety, that had ninety-six blossoms on it at one time. I have witnesses to prove it. A friend who has grown Saintpaulias for years said she had never seen such a gorgeous plant. Let me stress the point that it was a single crown plant, too; Needless to say it is one of my favorites with its constant bloom.

Blue Treasure is very aptly named. The many bright almost indigo blossoms on a stalk against the red stemmed, red veined foliage is truly a treasure.

My Pink Girl is a picture with her pretty scalloped leaves and lovely large pink blooms. I have had it about ten months and it has never been without a flowering stalk.

Orchid Lady is a good shade of orchid and makes a lovely contrast for the very dark shiny green leaves.

The sturdy medium green foliage of Blue Eyes with its soft clear blue flowers makes a beautiful plant and it is a vigorous grower.

And now in concluding my dozen, there are so many other varieties that I would like to sneak in, but now I can make but one more selection, and I feel that it would be imcomplete without the mentioning of White Lady. And tho' I have recorded it at last, I do consider it as a 'must' in any collection, either large or small.

In closing may I wish other violet fans as much enjoyment from their Saintpaulias as I am receiving from mine.

Feasterville, Penna.
May 15, 1948

HELLO EVERYBODY:

Allow me please, this time, to present my letter in sort of a news report fashion. Are all of you ready? Well then, let's enjoy together the first poem dedicated to our Homing Pigeons, contributed by no other than the well-known Jean Crowe of Rossville, Ga., (Unit 11).

The mailman whistled at the gate
I hurried out just couldn't wait,
To see what he had brought around
A Homing Pigeon there I found . . .

Across nine states had winged its way
To visit me 'till the third day,
I read the letters o'er and o'er
Then sent it off from my front door.

To carry on to all the rest -
My greetings and all I thought best,
Of Violet news; that I could share
With other members here and there:

These Pigeons tie in friendships band
People scattered throughout the land,
The members are not set apart
By age, since all are young in heart.

Country or city bred does not matter
Since both are always full of chatter,
Smart looks makes no difference there
We are not judged by what we wear!

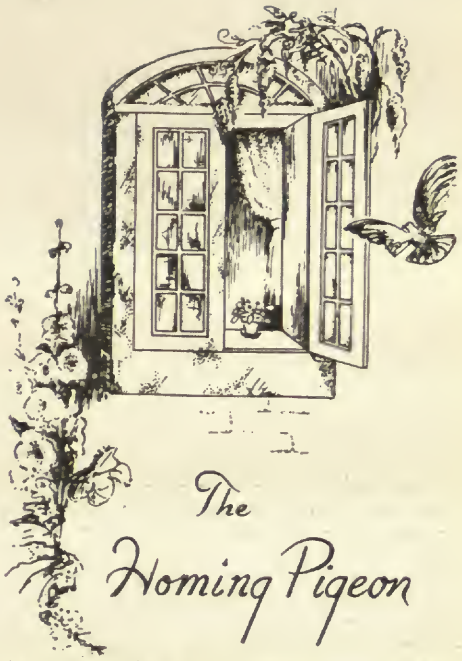
Money does not count at all;
The cost of postage is quite small,
And plants, no need to buy each one -
To trade varieties . . . is fun.

You buy one, I'll buy another,
In this way we help each other,
Uniting North, South, West and East,
The "Pigeon" is a "Dove of Peace".

And in conjunction with this same friendly spirit, I am delighed to relate a good scout deed recently performed by Miss Mary Hogeland: Feasterville, Penna. (Unit 15). Her stock of African Violets had multiplied until her window space seemed almost at a premium. But the problem was easily solved, when Miss Hogeland graciously donated twenty-four violets of the common varieties to a neighboring "Home for the Aged". This month, she expects to remember another institution and let more of her posies be a carrier of good Cheer.

Hear Ye! I have a very important announcement to make. Blue Chard and Waterlily (syn. "Starlight") are not yet available or released to the public. Please be patient.

In looking thru my scrap book, I notice that Mrs. Pansy Barnes: Shenandoah, Iowa



(a commercial and conscientious packer) suggests that "a solution of 2 teaspoons of powdered Alum to 1 gallon of rainwater given occasionally will intensify the color of leaves and flowers".

Emily Hodan: Cleveland Heights, Ohio (Unit 6) writes that her group favors the use of liquid fertilizers with Hyponex, and Vitamin B1 leading.

Rosa Peters of Grand Rapids, Michigan (Directors Pigeon, #10) praises Glaswick watering and reports that after she had switched all violets in one room to this method, the humidity had raised to 45° and 50°, amply repaying for her work. Glaswik material my be purchased at the Atlas Asbestos Co.: North Wales, Penna. By the way, Mr. Baxter's Pink Girl and Gorgeous have been given patent numbers 769, and 770 respectively. I would like to request that our public do not infringe, but rather guard the rights of the five patented Saintpaulias. The other three are namely: White Lady, Pink Beauty and Blue Girl.

Now in conclusion, I wish to thank my friends for their contributing material, and I invite each Pigeonite to mail me YOUR interesting data. Anxiously awaiting, and . . .

Sincerely yours,
Elsie Croasdale Freed
(Conductress)

COLLECTING CURSE OR BLESSING?

By Regina and Warren Gottshall

Almost everyone is happy and content with an African Violet, or African Violets; THEN - they discover that in addition to the "blue" one there is also a "white" and a "pink". Perhaps the local florist happens to be lucky enough to get a supply of whites or pinks or, miraculously, both. Again they are happy with these additions until they pass a window and see a "blue" that is not like the one they have, or a "pink" that is more "red". They knock on the door and are invited in; simply because African Violet owners are generally friendly folks. The real trouble or "ailment" starts when they discover that the "different blue" is Neptune and are initiated into the fact that African Violets - curiously enough - like other plants - have individual names.

In spite of the fact that in ignorance there is bliss, we cannot for long remain in ignorance because the African Violet Boom, in some circles, is considered even bigger than the Gold Rush or the Florida Real Estate one. The "grapevine" goes into operation with a vengence and we plague everyone we know until we learn that our blue, and pink, and white are Blue Boy, Pink Beauty and White Lady. During this seige we near whisperings of Blue Bird, Red Head, Ruffles, and Orchid Beauty and we write countless letters trying to add these few to our window sills; little knowing that the "collecting" bug has bit us. Finally, via the grapevine, we are asked "Do you have Frieda, or know where it can be had?" We ruin a typewriter two pens and several dollars worth of stationery finding Frieda - because no one else seems to have it. This is the final blow.

After the house is overcrowded with plants, purchased mostly as wee things we discover that Twilight, at our place, happens to be ridiculously similar to Blue Bird; that Pansy Purple Supreme is exactly like a plant we had purchased the year before and merely named Supreme. Our disgust is paramount until we hear of another, this time, exotic name and we are off again - knowing full well that it will probably turn out to be the same as, or very near to, one of the hundred or more plants we now have. Or the final blow may come when we hear a rumor to the effect that Neptune is probably Viking and Viking is probably Neptune. Then where are you?

The fault lies not with the violet; any and all of them are beautiful or have some redeeming feature, but, unfortunately, we cannot be content with them merely as African Violets. The collecting mania has got hold of us and we are out after NAMES. You gather together fifty names, we gather fifty-five and are disappointed, when we get around to realizing it, because the fifty-five names boil down to twenty-five varieties. The over zealous collector, hybridizer, or grower is at fault supplying the demands of other foolish collectors, hybridizers, or growers. All the names do not originate from chicanery - some must be attributed to ignorance and then, of course, there are the honest differences in leaf or flower that marks a distinct new variety. But chicanery has added its burden. There have been a few names created for pure "sales appeal". Strange as it may seem, it is not the commercial grower who is the real sinner in this case; rather the unscrupulous or careless amateur. The dealer may pass on as a new variety one that has merely been renamed by the amateur, or so very like an already accepted variety that it is not worth giving a separate name. Stock of these are purchased in all good faith and, because of the demand for new names, sold off as young plants before the grower has a chance to develope a mature plant of their own. Ignorance has, however, taken the highest toll.

All African Violet varieties do not grow exactly alike under different conditions - exposures, watering habits, soil mixtures, fertilizers, any of these may make a difference, even the plant's own variable nature. The collector secures a Blue Bird that is not exactly like the Blue Bird already in their possession and sooner or later, of only for means of personal identification, another "handle" is attached to the "different" plant. But collectors have a keener eye for names than they have for varieties and soon the grapevine goes into operation and a new variety HAS been created.

Not every African Violet plant should have a name, few of them deserve one, but this does not detract from the plant itself; which can be just as beautiful being a "violet" or unnamed plant or seedling. The recent rise in popularity has created in one half of the amateurs the desire to be another Baron von Saint Paul; but, as few of us can go off "globe-trotting" we become hybridizers - either to create a "true" red, or find the "mistake" of the "impossible" yellow, or simply to create and be able to name a variety. And well they should. Hybridization should be encouraged but the careless naming of anything ever so slightly different should be discouraged. Don't trust your own judg-

COLLECTING - CURSE OR BLESSING?

ment no matter how different your origination but get the opinion of others. The Society has a committee for the purpose of classifying varieties and would probably be willing to lend a hand in judging whether your find is worthy of a name as being a distinct variety. Neither the committee nor the Society can prohibit your naming anything you choose, so let your conscience and honesty be your just guide.

African Violets themselves have been a blessing in countless instances. Let not our quest for NAMES be the curse that will cause universal discontent with these plants and ultimately push them out of our living-room windows until they become the most "forgotten" genus of the century. This can happen and will happen unless a curb is completely and honestly placed upon the creation of new names. This does not mean that development of new varieties will be stalemated. It means rather that the advancement of African Violets in popularity will be steady and sure. The rose has grown in appeal through the centuries because of control and constraint as have all other plant families. So, too, will the African Violet if we do not smother it under a mountain of conflicting "Names" and "collecting" manias.

TO VIOLET FANS

BLUE GIRL loved a SAILOR BOY,
Which made this MAIDEN BLUSH;
She said he could COMMAND-'ER,
But BLUE BOY said: "oh, Slush!"

"I'd rather marry FRIEDA,
With radiant RED HEAD:
Her lovely RED BI-COLOR
Will knock BLUE BOBBY dead."

Then MYRTLE preened her RUFFLES,
Which made her BLUE EYES gleam;
And said: "I love a PURPLE PRINCE,
I think he is SUPREME."

The ADMIRAL then told MRS. BOLES,
To him always be true;
She said: "if I would promise that,
"Twould make poor DUPONT BLUE."

So, AZURE SKIES announce the Spring,
The RED BIRD sings his roundelay;
And MARY WAC and NEPTUNE SPOON,
The BLUEBELLES ring the wedding day.

C. E. Stiner.

"SAINTPAULIA"

Saintpaulia is my botanic name,
I would love to grow for you —
But as I'm terribly tempermental,
I'd better tell you — what to do.

Occasionally spray my foliage,
Tepid water, thanks, will suit,
And I like soil soft and crumbly
But never soggy at my root!

I need lots of light, a little sun,
East window suits me better,
I'm very dainty — want my picture
For a Homing Pigeon letter?

Please don't overcrowd me, but . . .
Don't lose me in too big a pot,
Treat me with some common sense
Then for you, I'll bloom a lot.

When you crave another posie —
Just take pebbles, water and glass
Cut a leaf, then stick it in —
Rooting isn't any task.

In a few weeks up will start
A precious Saintpaulia baby,
Handle me with care and then reuse
And you'll get a dozen . . . maybe.

African Violet is my nick name
But to violets, I'm not related,
And a hundred or more varieties
Makes Life for Holly complicated.

Now, if you'll treat me as advised,
I'll bring you many happy hours,
For to you I will gladly give
My best Saintpaulia flowers.

Ella Nipper.

GROWING AIDS FOR
AFRICAN VIOLET FANS

Terra-Lite brand Vermiculite
4 quart bag ..... 50¢
½ bushel bag ..... 95¢
Hyponex (concentrated plant food)
1 oz. box ..... $ .10
3 oz. box ..... .25
7 oz. box ..... .50
1 lb. box $1.00

New Book for African Violet Growers
"THE AFRICAN VIOLET"
by Helen Van Pelt Wilson
$2.50
(all prices postpaid)
H. G. Hastings Co.
P. O. Box 4088
Atlanta 2, Georgia

SOIL STERILIZATION OF SMALL LOTS OF SOIL

In a technical sense soil sterilization refers to the destruction of all forms of life in a given lot of soil. Such complete sterilization is not only unnecessary in most cases but often has an unfavorable effect on plant growth. Normal growth of many plants is dependent not only on the presence of essential elements but on certain beneficial microorganisms. If soil is completely sterilized these beneficial fungi and bacteria are killed and thus normal plant growth may not result. Therefore partial sterilization of the soil by killing the harmful organisms without destroying those that are beneficial is more desirable. The two practical methods of partial or complete soil sterilization consist of the use of heat or chemicals. Heat is applied either directly as dry heat, as hot water or as steam.

Small amounts of soil may be treated in an oven. Partial sterilization, sufficient to destroy most harmful soil organisms, will be obtained by maintaining a temperature, at the center, of 130°F. for twenty minutes. Almost complete sterilization will be obtained at a temperature of 160°F. for thirty minutes. This form of heat, as well as other forms will alter the texture of the soil and in some cases will cause the soil to be unfit for planting until it has been allowed to stand for several days. One way in which soil texture is altered is in its air-holding capacity. Since plant roots obtain air from the soil this change can readily affect plant growth. Therefor it is best not to over-treat soil that is going to be used for valuable plant material.

If soil has been overheated to the extent that its texture is seriously altered it can be returned to near proper condition by frequent light wetting and aeration. In order to further restore heat-treated soil to a proper condition, a small amount of soil from a disease-free area such as a woods may be mixed with it in order to build up beneficial organisms.

Direct heating of soil by burning wood on the planting site is still used and is a further usage of dry heat.

Sterilization of soil by steam is commonly used in greenhouses. Usually sufficient steam is applied to keep the soil temperature at approximately 180°F. or more for an hour. In the home a pressure cooker could be used for the same purpose. Steam has more drastic effects on soil texture than does dry heat and certain types of soil may be so compacted as to require several days of frequent aeration. Steam usually results in almost complete sterilization and thus destroys the beneficial organisms which often are very important to plant growth.

Chemical sterilization of soil is becoming increasingly popular. It has the advantages of usually destroying harmful fungi without affecting soil texture. A material that is widely used for treatment of greenhouse and nursery soils is chloropicrin or tear gas. When used properly this material kills fungi, nematodes, bacteria and weed seeds. Although too expensive for most crops many nursery men use it mainly as a means of weed control. Small lots of soil may be treated with chloropicrin by using an air-tight container and applying a small amount of the fumigant with each six inch layer of soil as it is added. Approximately two teaspoonfuls of chloropicrin are needed to treat one cubic foot of soil. The average weight of moderately moist, slightly packed, soil is about 100 pounds per cubic foot. After the fumigant is applied, the soil surface should be watered and the container kept closed for three days. During this time the soil temperature should be maintained above 60°F. Best control of weed seeds is obtained above 80°F.

Formaldehyde (formalin) may also be used as a soil fumigant. It controls most disease-producing fungi and bacteria but in the usual strength used is not very effective against nematodes. It is used as a solution of one part in 50 parts of water by applying directly to the soil at the rate of 1 gallon per square yard for treatment of infected planting areas. Formaldehyde may also be used to treat potting soil by using a solution of one part of commercial formalin with 5 or 6 parts of water and mixing 2½ tablespoonsful with one bushel of soil. Keep the soil covered for about 24 hours and then allow to aerate for 24 hours before using.

Other chemicals which are used as soil fumigants are ethylene dibromide, methylbromide, dichloropropene mixtures (DD), Lawn-a-gen, Dowfume, Soilfume, Bromofume and carbon bisulfide. Uramon (urea) and cyanamide (calcium cyanamide), when properly used will effectively control certain nematodes, fungi and weed seeds.

By W. F. Jeffers
Plant Pathology Division
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland

DIRECT SUNLIGHT ON AFRICAN VIOLETS

Harriet F. Lawton

Much has been said about avoiding direct sun on African Violets, especially when shining through windows with the plants too close to the glass. It burns the leaves; the moisture is drawn from the leaf and the leaves turn black and die. This is true particularly during the summer months when the sun is high and at its hottest. In Massachusetts it might be safe to put the plants in the direct sunlight from the end of October until the middle or end of April. But, from late April until late October at least, watch out! During these months the plants should be shielded in some way from the direct heat.

Others must be situated as I am, so that the sunny windows are the only available ones for plant culture. It is true that African Violets do not need direct sun to bloom, but they do need light and plenty of it. The greater the light intensity, (not necessarily sunlight) the greater the bloom. So, if one has only a sunny window in which to grow violets, they need not give up for the thing is quite possible with the proper shielding from that intense sunlight. If lace curtains are at the window, fine. They let in light but break the direct sun. If not, another way is quite possible and has worked out in my case very well.

A curtain is made of clear plastic and this material can be purchased at the yard goods counter of a department store. This comes a yard wide and sells for about $ .49 or $ .59 per yard. This curtain can be made to snap into place in a jiffy and kept there until the sun is by when it can be removed. Make this as follows: Stitch on the machine with a long stitch. 1/4 inch hem on either edge of curtain for strength. 1 inch hem top and bottom. A piece of ½ inch tape with elastic inserted in the middle, (for elasticity and a snug fit) and loops at either end of tape. These should be a bit longer than the width of the curtain. Make two of these, one to be run through the top hem and one through the bottom. The curtain can then snap into place as a small nail or brad is driven into the outside of the window frame to correspond with the four loops, one at each corner of curtain.

These curtains have many uses. Ours are on a small sun porch with windows on the East and South.

1. **As a shield against cold:** As a protection on cold nights between plants and windows. These have been used in conjunction with corrugated cardboard for extra insulation at plant level with outside temperature as low as 15° below zero. The temperature on the porch averages from 55° to 60° just inside the curtains. Curtains are removed during the day time in winter if warm outside or after sun has warmed up the glass sufficiently. On a severely cold day the curtains may be left up. The plants still get sufficient light through them.

2. **As protection against intense sun:** From late April, (earlier if necessary) until late October. Remove when sun no longer rests on plants.

3. **Insulator against heat:** They have been used as a convenience to keep out reflected heat from a trap rock driveway next to porch, making the porch a more comfortable place to sit, in extremely hot weather. Upon return from vacation I discovered my family found it a great relief in extremely hot weather as well as the plants!

4. **As a shield when spraying:** When spraying plants in window boxes just off porch, these were set up as a shield. The spray gun could be aimed towards the porch without danger to violets.

5. **High wind or rain:** In case of either, two extra tapes are used, (made in the same way) and are run diagonally from corner to corner and crossing in the middle. This keeps the curtain from billowing in, sail like, and injuring the plants.

This plastic is very durable and while it may become stiff with use, with exposure to sun and with contact with water and sprays, it is still usable over a long period of time. It has solved many difficulties for me and I believe others will find it useful too. It is well in making these curtains, to have them come just below the tops of pots in order to leave a little circulation of air.

AFRICAN VIOLET FEVER

A bug bit the lady and
The lady caught the fever,
Saint Paulia collecting,
The ailment would'nt leave 'er.
More plants, more kinds and colors
Was the ladys endeavor.
The hobby grew in leaps and bounds,
She was very clever
At finding new ones, and her zeal
Brought leaves from far and near.
The shelves were full, the tables too
Scarcely a chair was clear,
'Til the plants got the upper hand.
And now we greatly fear,
That the Hobby rides the lady,
For her family shed a tear.

Jean Crowe.

CLUB SUGGESTIONS

From a Handbook for African Violet
Growers by Mary Margaret Odom

With many African Violet Clubs being formed throughout the United States the following suggestions are given to aid in both organizing your club and planning your programs.

The following Constitution and By-Laws may with minor changes be adapted for most Clubs:

Article I Name -- The name of this organization shall be the _____ African Violet Club.

Article II Purpose -- The purpose of this organization shall be both social and educational.

Article III Membership -- Application for membership in the society shall be by written application, and approved by majority of active members.

Article IV Dues -- The annual dues for the individual members shall be _____, payable on or before _____.

Article V Officers & Elections - The officers of this Club shall be a President; one or more Vice--Presidents; a Recording Secretary; a Corresponding Secretary; a Treasurer; and a Reporter.

These officers shall be elected at the first meeting of each year.

1. President shall preside at all meetings. She shall appoint all committees, and to perform all duties pertaining to such office, and ex-officio of all committees.

2. The Vice-President shall preside in the absence of the President; and shall at all times assist the President in such work of the Club as may be assigned to her.

3. Recording Secretary shall keep an accurate account of all meetings of the Club. These minutes shall be read and approved at the regular meetings of the Club.

4. The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the club.

5. The Treasurer shall collect all dues and give receipts for same; Keep accurate account of same; pay all bills approved by the club. A report may be given the club each meeting.

6. These officers shall be elected by the club once a year for a period of one year.

Article VI Meetings -- The Society shall hold one or more meetings during a month for the transaction of its business and for the study of the work.

Article VII Amendments -- Proposed amendments to the constitution shall be sent to the Recording Secretary at least 30 days before the annual meeting.

Planning The Club Program

Most groups find that planning the program a year in advance is an advantage both to the club and to the members. Those in charge of the program have plenty of time to plan and prepare it. The overall results are that the meetings are more organized and inclusive.

Here are some general tips which may be adapted for most groups:

1. Make a list of topics or suggestions that members and program committee would like to cover during the year's work. (Learning wishes of individual members will make the committee's job easier and will satisfy more people as well.)

2, Decide what topics to use, and choose a subject and related roll call for every meeting . Make the program simple enough that it can be handled easily in the time allotted.

3. Plan special programs for holidays and special meetings (such as an exchange of leaves or plants, a choice plant for oldest and youngest mother on Mother's Day; or drawing of names at the beginning of the year for Sunshine Pals, to whom is given at various occasions, like birthdays and holidays, such gifts as African Violet plants, leaves, containers, plant food, etc. Of course the identity of the Sunshine Pal is not disclosed until the end of the year.)

4. Do not put many speakers on one program. If papers are to be read, set time limits of 5 to 10 minutes.

5. Try to match topics with individuals. People talk best about things in which they are most interested.

6. Include in the program hour, when possible, something relaxing or entertaining.

7. Plan to vary the programs by different means of presenting them. For example, debates, round-table discussions, outside speakers, exhibits, demonstrations, plays or field trips to greenhouses or homes.

8. Keep a list of material or sources from which ideas for subjects might have been obtained so persons in charge of programs can find additional material.

9. Have a booklet or some way of listing programs so a copy can be given to members. Yearbooks, typewritten or printed, add much to the program interest.

10. Publicize your program thru the local or county newspaper. Let other people know what your group is doing and accomplishing.

HOW I BECAME INTERESTED IN AFRICAN VIOLETS

By Lois F. Williamson

The above title was given me to write about; but I should prefer calling it "Fun With Leaves", for that is what I am having. It all began more than eleven years ago when my sister-in-law brought me a small plant from Tennessee; I know now that it was a Blue Boy. It was love at first sight. Not having even heard of the African Violet before, I knew nothing of how it should be cared for; so, in due time it went the way of all that is mortal. A friend in the city where we were living gave me another, and even after carefully following her directions this little plant soon joined her sister in the land where good plants go.

After a while of this trial and error method I reasoned that there must be a right and wrong way, and that some flower lovers somewhere must have the scientific know how. The extension floriculturist, Victor H. Ries, from the University of Ohio, set me on the road to successful culture of the plants, though there was much to learn in the school of practical experience - and I am still enrolled as a pupil. Since that time a number of current magazines have featured excellent articles dispensing on a silver platter the valuable information that I had previously gained the hard way.

Although I had grown African Violets successfully for several years, I did not attempt making any sort of collection until fairly recently. In 1944 both sons were in the service of our country, and my husband, a minister, had suffered a stroke of apoplexy. It seemed that my few little violets on our breakfast-room window shelves gave release from the anxieties and assurance of God's abiding presence, giving comfort, strength and guidance for the daily demands. As time went on my husband's health improved, and we took a country pastorate, giving up the large church in the town. His horticulture interests have been a great contribution to his complete restoration of health.

Being in a rural community I felt that I, too, should have some agricultural project as my church or "talent money" as some call it. Naturally, I turned to the violets, specializing in the varieties that ordinarily cannot be secured from the florists. The word went around by the grape-vine route, and now I cannot begin to supply the demand. The income from the sale of the plants and leaf cuttings I have used as my "for others" project. In looking over my list of benevolences for last year I realize that it has been my privilege to literally go around the world with violets. It is a joy to share them with friends, though I make it a practice of never giving them unless I detect that tantalizing, sincere, drooling gleam in their eyes - a real longing to possess one, and the assurance that it will be loved and well cared for if they get it. Not often have I misinterpreted that look.

With the help of a printer in our congregation I prepared a little sheet giving the outstanding points in the care of the African Violet in the home. This has proven a real time saver, for I have many requests for the information. My correspondence has given me many lovely friends whom I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting in person, though hope to have that privilege sometime in the future.

To make a collection of all known varieties is not my objective. I have a number of the best basic varieties, and about an equal number of some of the more recently developed ones - about thirty different kinds altogether, covering most of the range of color and leaf design. Some of these I shall perhaps discard later as newer and better ones are forthcoming. Some of my prized plants are the few that are gifts from the ones who have developed the variety. However, my start of a new plant has usually come from the purchase of a single leaf; and, having Scotch blood, when I pay fifty cents for a leaf I get as many rootings as possible. The record so far is five, and the leaf is still green. good for a few more, I think. Of course I am having fun with leaves! To me, the big thrill comes with getting that first bloom of a plant started from a leaf of your own planting; but most people want the plant - and it full of blooms also. The lack of time and space limits the number of plants I am able to grow; but. so far. have been able to supply the requested leaf cuttings.

All stories must have a climax, and this one is no exception. It's proof positive that dreams do come true - that is, if you dream and work long enough, and have good kind friends. Provision is made in most of minister's homes for the pastor's study, but I've never yet known one that had a retreat for his wife. But this manse has. "Fair Haven". The finishing touches are now being put on. and we can hardly wait to move in. It is a 12 by 16 ft. sun room adjacent to the garage. There is space nearest the garage for the tea cart, sewing machine and day-bed, and around the east and south sides, under the windows, is a three foot table for flowers, with storage shelves underneath for canned fruit and other things. It is really the overflow room. My family and friends have accused me of growing African Violets so that people would visit me. This is a delightful by-product, and I admit my guilt. Therefore, I invite my friends to have a cup of tea. or coffee if you prefer. with us in "Fair Haven": But -- do tele-

HOW I BECAME INTERESTED IN AFRICAN VIOLETS.

phone first, for I might be out with my husband pastoral calling, and I should hate to miss you. Do not give up if you repeatedly get the busy signal, for our telephone is on a party line.

So, growing African Violets is definitely a spiritual exercise for me, not only as my "for others" project, but also in my own development. I remarked one day that the plants taught me many things, and when asked what particular virtue I most developed I promptly replied "patience". They are so slow growing, and refuse to be hurried. Typical little Southerners, these African Violets!

It seems to me that somewhere I read that if older people want to retain their zest for living they must either be regularly engaged in useful work suited to their capacity of strength and training, or devote themselves to an absorbing hobby. As I have both, it must be that I am trying to keep young in mind and heart until Gabriel calls.

TINARI EXHIBIT AT FLOWER SHOW

Received Award of Merit; Many Varieties

Visitors at the Philadelphia Flower Show once again were thrilled with the African Violet Exhibit which won an award of merit in the special class, displayed by the Tinari Floral Gardens of Bethayres, who are specializing in this popular house plant.

More than 40 distinct varieties were on display throughout the week, very popular was "Blue Eyes" Tinari's own introduction, a soft baby blue, the Double Russian, a real double flowering variety displayed in full bloom, the ever popular Red Head, Trilby, Red Bi-color, Crinkles, the large flowering duPont and new Pink Beauty Supreme (Amazon). Attention too was given to the curious Albinos and variegated leaf sports in bloom.

Violet collectors from Delaware Maryland, Washington, D. C., Virginia, North Carolina and Maine were most enthusiastic over Mr. Tinari's newest introduction "The Orchid Flute" a beautiful deep colored orchid that opens when full mature to a very soft solid true delicate orchid some 2 to 2½" in diameter, with a sturdy large leaf, most outstanding.

Many visitors and guests later visited the gardens to see hundreds of the most colorful varieties in full bloom.

MY WIFE'S AFRICAN VIOLETS

Saintpaulias - - - hobby of my wife
Have now become part of my life;
And since they are so very fine
She calls them hers, I call them mine.

Other house plants, we have few - - -
Here and there, maybe one or two,
But violets we have by the score
Pink, blue, red and many more.

They're most beautiful to behold - - -
And more satisfying than gold,
They help to decorate our place
By filling every little space.

It's such a joy to see them grow
Big and little, row on row,
Cloudy days have no more gloom
When one has violets full of bloom.

The foliage and the flowers sweet
Help to make life more complete
And though at times they seem like many
Who would want to live without any?

Only God could make this flower
To comfort men in every hour,
To Him be praise forevermore
For the violets we adore.

By Rev. Mr. Morgan Andreas
Adamstown, Md.

Photo by Ross Mann
Pink Supreme (Amazon)

HAVE YOU MET MRS. BOLES?

If you have never met Mrs. Boles she is best described as a large and very handsome Saintpaulia. Some similarity is found to exist between this lady, and Mrs. W. K. du Pont, and the lovely Marine. Their foliage is somewhat alike and their blossoms though quite different in shape and texture are a rather similar shade of medium blue.

Mature leaves of Mrs. Boles measure from 3-1/4 inches by over 3-1/2 inches with pale green petioles averaging about 4 inches in length. Petioles of young leaves often have a touch of purple on them. A slight amount of purple is also found beneath the hairy mature medium green leaves which are most heavily quilted, very deeply fluted, and tend to cup upward slightly at the leaf axil. Young plants are a light to medium green which deepens as the plant ages. The foliage most nearly resembles the duPont varieties, but it is much heavier and the leaf is more pointed.

Mrs. Boles blooms at an average rate with large flowers of heavy substance from 1-3/4 inches to 2-1/4 inches across. The depth of color is often determined by the exposure the plant is grown in, the method of fertilization followed, and the type of soil used. The flowers have an attractive ruffled edge and are produced in clusters of 4 to 8 on sturdy stems usually well above the foliage. Blue Violet number 4 according to the Fischer Color Chart best describes Mrs. Boles flowers.

AFRICAN VIOLETS: and other choice houseplants. Send stamp for our spring list.

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Bunker Hill, Indiana

● ● AFRICAN VIOLETS ● ●
Plants in bloom, packaged to arrive in fine condition.
Would you like my free catalog?
MRS. JENNIE SPOUTZ
16825 Collingham Detroit 5, Mich.

JUST IN BRIEF

By Inquisitive

SHAKESPEARE SAYS. "At Christmas I no more desire a rose than wish a snow in May's new-fangled mirth; but like of each thing that in season grows." These lines by the immortal Bard are apt regarding the flowering seasons out in the open, and most of us do agree with him. Each flower has its blooming season out in the open, influenced very largely, of course, by the seasons.

But our favorite, the African Violet, is a sheltered plant and is not appreciably influenced in its blooming by the seasons. I well recall a dark and gloomy day I spent at work in our greenhouse last February. The wind was blowing a gale outside, but many sections of the greenhouse benches were fairly alive with lovely and colorful bloom and contrasting foliage colors. It was not difficult at all to do a bit of dirty work that day. In fact, as I now recall it, I believe that I whistled and hummed lively tunes all day long in that pleasing atmosphere. Who wouldn't?

BUT ITS SPRING NOW, and the African Violet plants in our kitchen windows, as I write this, are really doing their stuff. Its warm, balmy and sunny outside. Fifteen different varieties in three inch pots are on the ledges of the three windows. These fifteen varieties are my favorites today. But I'm fickle and if tomorrow I think I like some other varieties in our collection better, they will become my favorites. But these particular fifteen varieties on the window ledges are in full bloom and are really a sight to behold. By name they are: Purple Beauty, duPont Lavender Pink, White Lady, Commander, Blue Velvet, Fushia, Norseman, Blushing Maiden, Mentor Boy, Amazon Pink, Redland, duPont Blue, Dainty Maid, Blue No. 32, Amazon Blue. So our favorite indoor plant, the African Violet, is no special respecter of seasons, and may bloom profusely anytime.

YOUNG PLANTS DESIRABLE. I well recall the day last year when I selected and planted the leaf cuttings from which these fifteen plants of today's favorites came. My records indicate it was May 7, 1947, and now at the end of a little less than eleven months, comes the real pay-off. I like young plants best, the year-olders. The first full round of blooms on practically all varieties of well-grown plants of this age are exquisite. The color of the first blooms seem to me to be richer in tone and of better size.

COLOR TONES. An old friend, who is not an African Violet fancier, was in to see us a short time back. She pointed out the difference in color tones of three varieties of African Violets that we had not previously noted. She compared three of the purple or violet shades by placing a fresh bloom from each of them on white blotting paper. The bloom from the variety Neptune had almost a pure, clear purple-violet shade; the bloom from Supreme is the same shape as the Neptune bloom, but has a bit of red in the purple which gives it a slight purple-red tone. Commander's bloom, also similar in shape to Neptune's bloom, also quite a bit of red in it which gives it a red-purple tone. This type of close comparison helps greatly in discerning true color tones. Try it sometime.

TWO LOVELIES. I tried to pass them hurriedly in the greenhouse because I had a caller. But both were in bloom and were such neat and unusual types of African Violets as to color of foliage and form of growth, that I was compelled to go back later and again look them over at close range. The-Lady-of-Our-House calls these two "Her Lovelies" and by name they are Blue Eyes and Dainty Maid. Blue Eyes has light olive green, short stemfed leaves that are slightly pointed and ovate in general shape. It has a tufted form of growth that is dainty and appealing, and blooms attractively low above its foliage. Color of its medium size blooms is what I call old fashion "baby blue', which is light blue of course.

Dainty Maid has light green leaves that are somewhat round in shape and are slightly hairy. It, too, has a tufted form of growth almost identical with Blue Eyes. Its cameo pink blooms are considerably larger than the blooms of Blue Eyes, but they, too, bloom attractively low over the foliage. While I am not yet sure, my guess is that both Blue Eyes and Dainty Maid are either sports or seedlings of White Lady. Does anyone of our readers know about this? Tell us if you do.

ITS ALMOST GREY, in "color tone" declared the neighbor from across the road who is an expert on flower arrangement and naturally has a good eye for color in flowers. So I believe we can let it go at that and say that Tinted Lady is the first grey African Violet I've seen. I like it, both for its unusual color tone and its dark green leaves that are very much like the leaves of Ionantha grandiflora in color and shape, but happily, the leaf stems of

JUST IN BRIEF

Tinted Lady are considerably shorter than Ionantha grandiflora's. When Tinted Lady gets a wide distribution I predict that a real national liking for it will come about.

FEEDING THE SOIL is so very closely related to feeding plants that all of us should have at least a basic understanding of this relationship. Mr. John L. Cope, of Savannah, Georgia, and one of the best informed men in the South on plant nutrition, said that plant feeding is based upon two important factors. First, it is necessary to feed the soil to make it's physical structure capable of supporting optimum plant growth. Being a champion for inorganic fertilizers - he manufactures them and certainly understands their greatest values - Mr. Cope is also broad-minded enough to realize the necessity of organic materials in the soil along with that of the inorganics. In further stating this, he indicated that we must first incorporate humus - such as manures, good composts, peat moss and the like - into most soils that are apt to be somewhat bare of these elements to make them retentive of moisture and plant foods in solution. Humus is one of the most important soil constituents, for it is valuable not only for its moisture-holding capacity, but is also necessary to support bacterial life in the soil and to aid in improving the condition of clay and sandy soils.

This incorporation of humus in the soil is termed by Mr. Cope as, "Feeding the Soil". Then, he states, we are ready to feed our plants. This is where the inorganic elements fit into the picture perfectly, for much of the soils in practically every part of the Country are either devoid or partially devoid of both the essential and minor plant foods. These can be supplied mainly through the so-called inorganic fertilizers, or commercial fertilizers as they are popularly known. The forms of humus that we use in soil building cannot be compared in food value to these commercial fertilizers which contain valuable mineral elements. In fact, we African Violet growers cannot get along without either organics or inorganics. They should be used in the soil building programs as companions, not as opponents.

AFRICAN VIOLETS COMMERCIALLY

By Ruth Yoars

As retail growers, we are interested in the plants, varieties, care, pests and all other phases of the collections of our patrons, so that their efforts may be successful and they will have the enjoyment which they have a right to expect from their African Violets. We learn to love all plants, as we care for them, months before they are ready for our customers. In this article, we wish to bring out a few of the most important factors in producing Saintpaulias for the trade. The grower must satisfactorily work out every angle of his problems and the requirements are numerous. This is done mostly through experience and profiting from mistakes. While the State Universities and even the State Department of Entomology have accomplished considerable, yet there still seems much more to be learned about this temperamental house plant. Therefore the growers will have to continue experimenting for themselves until they find a method that is successful to their own individual need.

One finds that in the course of a few months almost every conceivable question will arise. They include culture, combating diseases, varieties and queries not even concerning African Violets. We take the problems seriously of the questions we are unable to answer and endeavor to experiment attempting to find an explanation. As to the proper soil, because of the various kinds over the country, we suggest that the interested violet fan have their's tested. We use "neutral soil" and advise where this is not available the use of proper food to balance it and to keep the plants in good condition.

Spring or fall are the most desirable times in which to have your soil analyzed. If unprepared to do this yourself, send a sample to your county farm bureau agent or your state agriculture college. I suggest your using a trowel to make 6 or 7 inch hole. Next cut a thin, uniform slice from top to bottom and care should be taken to prevent the soil from becoming contaminated with dust, chemicals or fumes of any kind.

Soil Scale: pH

9.5	intensely alkaline
9.	strongly alkaline
8.5	definitely alkaline
8.	moderately alkaline
7.5	slightly alkaline
7.	NEUTRAL
pH 6.5	very slightly acid
6.	slightly acid
5.5	moderately acid
5.	moderately acid
4.5	definitely acid
4.	strongly acid
3.5	intensely acid

In regards to insects we have tried many kinds of sprays in an effort to find a satisfactory one and can at last recom-

mend NNOR Rotenone to the public, as the African Violet and its reaction to many insecticides is entirely different from other plants. "Rotenone can claim the almost unique feature of being deadly to insects but harmless to human beings, pets and plants, in the concentration in which it is generally used as an insect spray".

As to varieties, we frequently have requests for specified kinds before we know they exist - so we can make a note of them and then begin an extensive hunt. Many times it has been proven to be an error in the name, or another synonym. A long, long time is consumed in the propagation and testing of any new violet before it is available to the public on the market. All seedlings should be discarded that prove similar to previously named varieties.

We have been collectors for a number of years and a new strain, or color to us is as "mouth watering a morsel as a juicy bone is to a dog", (pardon my quotation from Miss Fay Wilcox, a very friendly competitor - but I, myself, am at a loss to find a better comparison). As a service to our patrons, we conscientiously try to avoid the listing of two or more similar violets under separate names. Tho' occasionally we are mistaken after we have formed an opinion that there did exist a difference, time has proven some of them to be identical, or nearly so. One illustration of this, is when we bought Western Amethyst from Michigan, Orchid Lady and Rosie from Iowa, and Light Orchid Beauty Lavender Lady from Georgia. When they began blooming we found them to be so nearly identical that it was not advisable to list them separately. We understand that the first name given to this group, was Light Orchid Beauty. We have also had another different experience with the old, original (dark) Orchid Beauty and Mary Wac. We had these and believed them to be sufficiently different to warrant offering them as two varieties, even after others had pronounced them alike. The explanation is quite simple. Plants in this color group fade and when grown in different exposures show entirely different tones of orchid. Finally, we set them in the same light and in just a few days found they were alike in every respect but a minor one - when they are grown in blocks of several hundred, the Orchid Beauty shows a red cast over the blossoms while Mary Wac has a tinge of blue. However, this of no value to the collector as when they are set out as single specimens this difference is so slight that it is not noticeable. I am also of the opinion that Trilby and Plum can be grouped in this same category as Orchid Beauty and Mary Wac.

We seldom sell plants before they come into bloom, as it is well known that African Violets throw sports or mutations and when sold before they have blossomed, people occasionally feel they have received a mislabeled plant. While these sports, if kept in our possession, prove in some cases to be important to us. Under ordinary circumstances these can in a short period revert back to the original plant, yet a commercial has learned to stabilize these sports in a few generations that will make it remain a different variety.

Another topic that brings many inquiries is the fertilizer subject. We have been most successful in using cow manure water - put out commercially under many different trade names. One that I have in mind is Liqua-Nure and either this or a similar product can be purchased at large seed houses, if it is not available near by. We recommend the use of it, because it is a cool tonic and never burns the most tender roots.

In conclusion I take pleasure in stating that we endeavor to give our customers prompt service and we leave no stones unturned in packing plants in a satisfactory way. But, after the packages leave us, we must entrust them with others who we hope will adhere to our "Perishable" and "Fragile" warnings. Long live the African Violet and may the public have continued success and enjoyment in growing them!

SAINT PAULIAS

"Saint Paulia" they are called
In robes of verdant hue
And wearing on each blossomed head
Bright halos of royal blue.
Small saints in truth they seem;
Sweet harbingers of heaven above
Teaching a creed of brotherhood
Symbolic of the Father's love.
Across this mighty land of ours
In all its far-flung ends
Devotees of Saint Paulias
Once strangers, now are friends.

--By Neva Beers

"CARE AND CULTURE OF AFRICAN VIOLETS"

By Lloyd Putnam Lindsey

Third edition (enlarged). Gives many secrets of the experts, 50¢
Safety African Violet Waterer 25¢
(No Stamps) African Violets, Box 1666 Asheville, N. C.

MY 1948 PLAN FOR SAINTPAULIAS, PLUS A VACATION AWAY FROM HOME

BY: Helen Pochurek

First, let me tell my sad story, and sad it was, to say the least. I shall profit by the experiences I had in 1947 both good and bad. I had about 75 plants, that I had planned to exhibit at our Garden Club show in September. They were all different varieties and by the middle of August were a mass of bloom. They were a sight to see, as they sat on the glass shelves in the dining room windows.

Without a qualm, we planned a weeks vacation on Lake Huron. We closed the house up after providing for moisture, proper sunlight, and all the necessary things in plant care. Let me emphasize, not knowing what the weather would be, we did not leave a window open.

After a glorious week we came home, to find my beautiful plants were a sorry looking mess. On only one plant was there a blossom left, and that was just a lonely, dejected looking blossom. The leaves hung over the sides of the pots and the plants looked as tho they would never recover. They were not in need of water and I could not imagine what had happened to them.

The next day, still wondering what I had done wrong. I began to freshen up my living room. In moving some large chairs around, I found large patches of mold on the carpeting. Quick as a wink it dawned on me just what had caused my plants to very near go to that special place in heaven that is reserved for African Violets. I realized it was lack of fresh air, with the house closed up the air had become stagnant. Then and there the mystery was explained

Fresh air was a thing my African Violets, and I had taken for granted until I saw what lack of it would do.

Now for the good experience. The balance of my African Violets enjoyed their vacation outdoors. Early in June, when the temperature was in the 70's and the trees in full bloom and leaf, out went the plants not in bloom, the tiny ones, and the leaves I had in small pots. Even 4 large aquariums full of potted leaves. With my fingers crossed I set all the pots in large flats and set them on the ground - I found a natural made to order place for them. On our hillside, we have a carpet of honeysuckle. Thru the honeysuckle grow huge clumps of wild purple violets. An old apple tree with spreading branches stands about 50 feet from our dining room windows. Its low spreading branches have been an invitation for the honeysuckle to climb on. As a result, nature has made a bower with a dense covering of honeysuckle high up in the branches. There, I set my flats and every few days, I went out to see them. Every plant seemed to take on new life and seemed to love their new home. One day, disaster struck in the form of a rabbit. I found quite a few leaves chewed off. So up the flats went on cement blocks, about two feet from the ground. Then they really began to go to town. The undersides of the leaves took on such beautiful colors. It was a joy to see them, even the tiniest leaf became a large plant in a very short time.

They received no sun, except a stray ray here and there in late afternoon. Not once did I water them, I left that to Mother Nature. Even in the dry spells, they didn't mind. The dense shade helped to keep them from drying out too much.

They remained outdoors until late in Sept. The weather had been very nice and then, quite without warning, it turned quite cold. Being busy in the house I did not notice it, until in the early evening I went outdoors.

It was decidedly cold when I happened to think of my violets. We checked the temperature and I was horrified to find that it registered 45°. I thought I would find them in a sorry state, but they seemed to be O.K. We moved them into the garage for a few days so as not to subject them directly into a warm house from a chilly outdoors. Left them there for a few days and then gradually moved them into the basement. After they had become acclimated to the house, I started to clean them up. They were dirty and dusty, not very attractive in that condition. Soooo, how to clean them was next. How? (a plug for Proctor and Gamble), I used "Dreft" in one of my laundry tubs with warm water, then warm water in the other tub. I used a soft brush and cleaned each and every leaf, then rinsed them off in the other tub. It took me two days to do them all and a tedious job it was. I was well satisfied, tho as plants had never looked prettier, they were so rosy colored from their outdoor sojourn. I had to use extreme caution, tho as they were so brittle, they broke very easy.

Then, in case any stray creatures had found their way into the pots, they were given a dose of sodium selenate. I didn't lose a plant with all this drastic and unorthodox treatment. The plants that I thought I was going to lose in the house, the ones in my sad story, also became rejuvenated with only a months outdoor sojurn.

What interested me was the fact, that even tho they had been so cold, at a temperature that should have meant their doom, they didn't mind it a bit. I attribute that, to the fact, that they had gradually, from day to day, become accustomed to the

lowered atmosphere and became hardened to it. This summer I am going a bit farther and leave a plant out, just to check it to see how cold it can get before it succumbs.

I am putting all my plants outdoors as soon as it is warm enough, even tho' they are in bloom. I know they will come thru with flying colors, for they are not the sissy's we've always thought them to be. I most heartily recommend a vacation for you and your Saintpaulias.

SAINT PAULIAS CAN BE HARDY

Mrs. William L. Forrest

Going on the assumption that almost all amateur African Violet growers are eager to read of the experience of another amateur, I will try and pass on to you what I have learned about this beautiful flower.

As I wanted to raise many plants from leaf cuttings my husband built a 5-ft. by 5-ft. cold frame, sinking the 2-inch thick wooden sides 2-ft. into the ground and leaving 1-ft. above ground. Instead of making a flat glazed top usually attached to a cold frame, he made glazed sections for roof and ends, and mounted them on the foundation at a pitch of sixty degrees. It is like a miniature greenhouse with a door on the South end just large enough for me to get inside and kneel. Ventilation is at top, and also from the door. We picked a location that gets very early morning sun and then shade until the afternoon. We had no idea what the temperature would rise to inside this frame.

There is no floor; just the garden soil, and into this I forked a thin layer each of rotted manure, course leaf mold, peat moss, compost from my compost heap and some vermiculite. The soil here - on Long Island - is very sandy so I did not add sand. This was watered and let stand for a few days.

The first batch of leaves were planted the middle of August, each stem first being dipped in Rootone. The weather was still quite warm so that the temperature inside of the frame rose to 200-degrees and over during the afternoon when the sun rays were directly on the glass, in spite of shading material put on the glass and the door being left open. The soil was kept damp so the humidity was exactly to thier liking - in fact the inside of the frame had the humid smell of a tropical plant greenhouse. In less than two weeks the first batch of leaves had good roots. At intervals of a week or so I started new leaves until the end of September. All formed large roots necessitating the use of three and four inch pots when I potted them up. Incidentally, I had placed a bought Violet in the frame and from it my young plants got the tiny black fly. I used the soil from the frame for potting purposes, and in it I mixed tobacco dust. I haven't seen a black fly since. I also added a little Hyponex to the potting soil. Even in October good heat generated in the frame, which I attribute to the 2-ft. of foundation in the ground and the large area of glass to catch the sun rays.

Within six weeks of the time the first leaves were planted I brought into the house fifty-eight plants - most of them with many new leaves. Since then these plants have been standing on large trays filled with dry sand. over a radiator, in a Southern exposure. Venetian shades keep the strong sun rays off the plants, but they do get a little diffused sunshine. They have had to contend with adverse conditions. When the sun shines on the window its heat, together with the radiator heat, goes up to 100-degrees (a fact my husband had to verify for himself before he would believe it). During the evening and through the night the temperature drops to 50-degrees, yet these plants have continued to grow and are very healthy. They are nearing the blooming age and are showing all the indications that they will bloom.

THEY CALL IT SODIUM SELENATE

By Bonnie Hale

"Our plants are clean, insect-free, treated with sodium selenate" writes one reputable grower of violets. "Plants Bite Back" catches my eye in another advertisement. This must be just what our club needs for the discussion of disease at the next meeting. But suppose Little Kwensis should get sick? I'd better not wait to write a letter, I'll just call long-distance.

"Yes. Solium Selenate?" "Yes, I can wait till you find the formula." "I hesitate to give you the formula" says the voice on the other end of the wire, "It is dangerous, so dangerous that too much will kill your violets, and too little is of no benefit. Understand, it's your own risk."

More determined than ever, I call the seed stores. "You might try the wholesale drug" they say. I try another. "You never heard of it?" Says the voice, "A place in New York has it." "Yes", I reply, "I'm expecting a package."

THEY CALL IT SODIUM SELENATE

Not a cobra or anything dangerous is in the package, which is marked "Caution", "Do Not Drop", "Handle With Care", "Dangerous". I shan't touch the stuff. Seems I have heard one should wear a mask when working with it. If only I had written down every word they said.

Come's New Year's Day, a holiday. After driving three-hundred miles in the tail-end of a hurricane, we arrive at our destination to see right before our eyes hundred of gallons of the lovely blue liquid in the making. Sodium selenate they call it. No mask, no fumes! In three weeks, sixty thousand little African Violets will bite back.

Now my violets, that were trying to develop into a cabbage, have been treated with sodium selenate and not one of them died. I'm afraid I did not make the solution strong enough.

Dr. W. E. Blavreit of Cornell University told a florist's meeting at Cornell that sodium selenate is out of experimental stage. Over eighteen thousand pounds were used in 1946. Following directions carefully, lets keep our African Violets clean and strong with Sodium Selenate.

ANTHRACNOSE IN AFRICAN VIOLETS

By Deane Waskey

Growing African Violets has been my hobby for several years. I had invested $20.00 this fall for new varieties and was enjoying their beautiful blooms when disaster struck. It is a custom of mine to brush the leaves with a soft brush, and one morning I noticed small pin-point holes in the leaves. Upon examining the underside of the leaves I found round, to irregular sunken spots which were whitish in color; these looked very much like cankers I have found on vegetable leaves such as Cucumber, Melons, Beans, Tomatoes, etc.

These spots eventually turned brown and dropped out leaving a hole in the leaf. The leaf would then turn brown around the edges wilt and die.

I examined the leaves for Mealy Bugs, Cyclamen Mites, and knew it was not Crown Rot. Some of the entire plant leaves were destroyed and died. The disease spread rapidly, so that each plant I owned became infected. No one seemed to know the cause or the control, so I sent a leaf and some of the earth the plants grew in to four plant pathologists of four State Universities and to one greenhouse that grew nothing but African Violets. None of them could analyze nor diagnose the disease. Some felt it was a fungus disease, while others felt it was a virus disease, but none offered a method of control.

The greenhouse said they had seen several nurseries infested with the trouble and called it NEMATODES, a very contagious disease of the roots. Since I received no definite help from these sources I began to study the cause from a pamplet called "Diseases and Inseets of Vegetables," published by the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. The description and pictures of a plant infected with a disease called ANTHRACNOSE caused by a bacteria seemed to describe my trouble perfectly.

The control they prescribed was spraying with Bordeaux Mixture. I used one teaspoon of a preparation called Fungi-Bordo to one cup of warm water, and sprayed the clean leaves on the underside, picking and burning the infected ones. Then I removed each plant from the soil it was in, and throughly washed in lukewarm water every particle of earth from the roots. I sterilized the pots by boiling them, or treating in a pressure cooker, and baked some new soil in the oven for an hour.

I then planted the Violets in sterilized earth and pots. For one month now no appearance of this disease has shown up, and I feel I have found the control . I advise each and every Violet grower to bake your pots and to sterilize the earth before transplanting a Violet from outside source, for I feel sure this disease came from a greenhouse where I purchased the plants.

Always inspect the underside of the leaves for this disease spot I have described, and it will save you a great deal of grief. It can be carried on your hands from pot to pot and is very contagious.

Tinari Floral Gardens

Saintpaulia Growers & Specialists

Dept. 13 Bethayres, Pa.

Send for deseriptive African Violet list 40 varieties available for immediate shipment.

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The African Violet Magazine

VOL. 2 NO. 1

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of America, Inc.

Vol. 2 No. 1

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The Editor says: Your cooperation will be most appreciated if when writing to the members of the magazine staff you enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your reply.

If you have any unusual or interesting experiences in growing Saintpaulias may we invite you to write an article for publication in an early issue of this magazine?

Mr. Boyce Edens will notify you when your membership fee is due. Notification has been mailed out to those members whose membership expired with the 4th issue of this magazine.

The Society does not necessarily endorse or guarantee the advertising appearing in this magazine. The policy of the magazine is to accept advertising from recognized growers and business firms wishing to advertise their products in this publication. Advertising rates are $3.00 per column inch.

The African Violet magazine is published quarterly by the African Violet Society of America, Incorporated and is entered as second class matter at the postoffice Knoxville, Tennessee under the act of March 3, 1879.

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COVER DESIGN: DU PONT SEEDLING

Photo by Ross Hahn

A beautiful du Pont Violet blossom and bud from an unnamed seedling of the du Pont variety is our cover design for Volumn II Number I.

The ruffled blossom has good texture and form, and is a most distinctive bi-color in shades of lavendar and pink. A flat growing plant with extra heavy, rounded, hairy leaves of a medium green, completes the description of this handsome violet.

A Handbook for African Violet Growers.

Thru an oversight credit was not given to Mary Margaret Odom's book, "A Handbook for African Violet Growers", for Mrs. George Pendleton's interesting article, "African Violets As I Grow Them".

The President's Message

Local African Violet Societies

Eighteen local African Violet Societies that we know of have sprung up and are flourishing in fourteen different states, as follows: Atlanta, Georgia, Battle Creek, Michigan, Birmingham, Alabama, Cincinnati, Ohio, Dayton, Ohio, Des Moines, Iowa, Flint, Michigan, Greeneville, South Carolina, Huntington, West Virginia, Knoxville, Tennessee, Los Angeles, California, Memphis, Tennessee, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Omaha Nebraska, Richmond, Indiana, Springfield, Missouri, Springfield, Pennsylvania and Washington, D. C. The state of Tennessee leads with three local societies; Michigan is next with two; and the other states and the District of Columbia have one each.

That is the count at present, but we are confident there are others we have not heard from or that may have been overlooked in the count. First off we say to these other societies, "We want to hear from you." Will you send me the names and addresses of all the officers of your societies? We recognize that this is the first and somewhat limited roll call of local African Violet Societies, but we very much want to make our records complete and thus to properly record every local society.

To all local societies now in operation, and to those still in process of organization, we send assurance of our sincere interest in your activities. We desire to make this interest manifest by doing everything we reasonably can to assist each local society in its activities. We are equally concerned with stimulating the organization of a local African Violet Society in every community that does not now have one and that really wants one. Smaller communities may not have but one local society, but in the larger communities there may be several, just as there are sevral garden clubs. The local African Violet society may be a part or department of a local garden club, or it may be separate and distinct in its organiztion.

The Second Annual Convention of the membership of African Violet Society of America, assembled recently in Cincinnati, Ohio, voted unanimously to . . . "Encourage the organization of a local Africa Violet Society in different sections of the United States. These local societies shall be entirely autonomous with regard to their form of organization, management and operation". These are the exact words of an amendment to the Society's by-laws, and they say to all who are interested locally everywhere to organize and operate African Violet Societies in their respective communities along such lines as will best meet local needs and desires. In offering this amendment to the By-Laws, the officers and members of African Violet Society of America were unanimous in the desire that local societies shall be independent in the development of their local organizations and have them just as they wish them to be.

This amendment further assures that all members of a local African Violet Society may, upon payment of only $2.50 annual dues, become individual members of African Violet Society of America; and thereby entitled to enjoy all benefits and privileges of such membership, which include the splendid quarterly Magazine published by the Society. This concession enables the local society to retain 50¢ of the annual membership dues of its members who are also members of the National Society. At this rate every member of a local African Violet Society should also be a member of African Violet Society of America.

How best may we further help your local African Violet Society in its operation and development? Please do write me as fully as you wish in answer to this question. Your suggestions and your wishes will mean much to us in shaping the Society's future course of helpfulness to its entire membership.

Cordially,
Your President,
Mrs. O. E. Kellar

Convention Highlights

By Inquisitive

Ho! THE SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION. One hundred and one members of African Violet Society of America checked in at the registration desk of the Second Annual Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, May 21 - 22. The program started with an interesting bang and ended that way too. Yes — sir, and mam — members of the Society flocked in from fifty-seven different cities. Almost every state east of the Rockies was represented. Everyone voted it the best Convention ever attended and a good time was had by all. You'll read much more about it elsewhere in this issue but, being the inquisitive kind, I just have the feeling that I should try to put a reflector back of a few of the Convention highlights, so to speak, in an effort to get them into more conspicious focus for those who did not attend.

TRIBUTE WHERE TRIBUTE IS DUE. One just must call names in a matter of this kind in order to pay proper tribute. First off, then, a thundering applause goes to the Convention's Official Hostess and Host, Myrtle and Arthur Radtke of Cincinnati. And I really mean it! Mrs. Radtke made all local arrangements and carried them out beautifully in putting the Convention on. Arthur Radtke, through his well-known hospitality, made it possible for as many of the member delegates as desired to do so to stop at the famous Cincinnati Club, and all events of the Convention program were staged there. Mrs. Theresa Moeller, one of the Cincinnati members, looked after the efficient registration of the member delegates, and Boyce Edens, down in Atlanta, Georgia — the African Violet center — looked after essential pre-convention planning and arranging the program events.

MR. AND MRS. Don't just think that African Violet interest is confined to the gentler sex. Ten different 'Mr. and Mrs.' attended this Convention together and not a cross word (that I heard) was had regarding which of the African Violet plants in the extensive Exhibit is the finest. Eight other men, all enthusiastic violet fans, were also there. It was just about as much of a man's Convention as it was a woman's. Would you believe it?

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NEW VARITIES FROM CROSSES. There was nothing highbrow about the Convention program. It was pitched on a level of good old fashioned, every-day understanding, and that's what I especially liked about it. The opening meeting on Friday morning was devoted entirely to a symposium on Propagation of African Violets through the Processes of Hybridization and seeding. William E. Merkel of Mentor, Ohio, originator of African Violet varieties Mentor Boy, Bi-color and Red Head, was discussion leader of this meeting. Taking part with Mr. Merkel were Henry Peterson of Cincinnati, Ohio, Mrs. Ruth Yoars of Bunker Hill, Indiana, Mr. Frank Tinari, Bethayres, Pennsylvania, Mr. R. G. Baxter and Mrs. Mead, Youngstown, Ohio. Mr. Paul Slough of Springfield, Ohio, and Mrs. Jennie Spoutz of Detroit, Mich. Finally, practically everyone of the member delegates attending this meeting fired questions right and left without hesitation. The discussion by Mr. Merkel brought out how the three varieties mentioned above were produced by hybridization, and gave rise to the general conclusion that many more new and splendid varieties can be developed through these processes in the future. The discussion of such an interesting topic suggested that everyone present, if they desired to do so, could make planned crosses, plant the resulting seeds, enjoy the raising of their very own seedling plants, and probably hit the jack pot by originating an outstanding new variety.

Mr. Merkel said, "The fact cannot be over emphasized that the breeder should know what constitutes a good variety, he should be critical of his seedlings, and he should not hesitate to discard varieties that do not measure up. In looking at the seedlings one must get away from the idea that 'there is no child like my child.' As I see it there are only two valid reasons for putting a new variety on the market. . . it either should be a deftnite improvement in some respect over the sorts of the same color that are in commerce at present, or it should be entirely different from present existing varieties. A seedling must not only look good it must actually be good."

NEW VARIETIES EXHIBITED. Twenty outstanding growers of African Violets, both professional and amateur, were invited to exhibit their new and not-so-well-known varieties during the Convention. A number of professional (commercial) growers and a few amateurs responded to this invitation. One of the exhibit rooms of the Club was almost full of plants entered by the exhibitors.

J. A. Peterson & Son of Cincinnati, Ohio exhibited splendid specimen of Supremes of the varieties Amethyst, Lavender Lady, Norseman and Sailor Boy. These were mutants or variations of these well-known varieties.

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Tinari Floral Gardens of Bethayres, Pennsylvania exhibited their new varieties, both mutants of the duPont strain, Blue Flute and Orchid Flute.

C. Merkel & Sons Company of Mentor, Ohio exhibited a number of their excellent new varieties. Some were named and some un-named and, as I understand it, all are well-grown seedlings. Blue and violet tones predominated among these seedlings.

Ulery Greenhouses of Springfield, Ohio exhibited a number of their new ones that were tops. Some of these were mutants of the well-known variety Blue Girl. Among the plants they exhibited was a Blue Girl sport done in an orchid tone. There was also a fine light blue that was not a Blue Girl sport apparently, and different from any of the light blues I have seen. I do not have in my notes or memory the names of any of these fine things from Ulery.

John Good, Good and Reese, Springfield, Ohio, exhibited several of his new and different colored duPonts that we have been hearing so much about. These fine new things will add materially to the already sizable number of duPont seedlings and mutants. I do not recall that any of Mr. Good's new ones bore names, but everybody in 'Violetdom' is waiting for him to build up a sufficient stock of these new duPonts in order to get them into early distribution.

In fact, we all are waiting for all of the new varieties exhibited at the Convention to be distributed through proper channels to all of the eager and enthusiastic violet fans throughout the Country.

WHICH ARE THE BEST ONES? The Exhibit of the new varieties I have briefly high lighted was strictly non-competitive. No prizes were offered or given. Neither were there any official judges, as in a competitive show, to chase everyone out of the room and commence judging plants according to a scoring chart. I was glad that this was so because it encouraged everyone to look them over leisurely, with note book in hand, and say to himself, 'which are the best ones?' I do not know which ones anyone else picked as the best because I did not compare notes with them. But there were three varieties that I liked best. Here they are in the order given. Frank Tinari's Blue Flute is the best light blue of the duPont strain I have yet seen, Henry Peterson's Supreme Norseman, an exquisite medium light blue, with the characteristic thick foliage and large bloom. Ulery's excellent light blue exhibited by Mr. Slough. I just must have these three bloom for me in my collection. Yum!

THE FACE OF NATURE, as portrayed in the finely-carved speech of Helen Van Pelt Wilson on this timely subject, lifted everyone at the Friday evening dinner meeting to higher levels of interest and enthusiasm. Miss Wilson was the Convention' guest of honor, attractive, charming and gracious her talk was full of rich personal experiences. She gave many interesting stories and quotations on the value of the love of flowers in achieving peace of mind and in the making of a fuller and happier life. Miss Wilson inspired those present with a deep sense of gratitude for the many friends they have made thru an interest in this fine plant, and a desire to share with others the joy and pleasure of their African Violets.

THAT GREENHOUSE LOOK. It is an intriguing sight to view long rows of benches in greenhouses, laden to overflowing with colorful African Violet plants, so well-grown. Well, the trip many of us were privileged to take to J. A. Peterson & Son's fine greenhouse set-up on the last afternoon of the Convention was a fitting note on which to end it. We had seen the fine array of plants of Norseman, Admiral, Blue Number 32, Lavender Lady, Neptune and others, that composed such tasteful table decorations at the various meetings of the Convention, and had wondered from whence they came. Here at Peterson's we saw them blooming by the thousands, and knew then that Henry Peterson had provided them. You can believe this inquisitive visitor to Peterson's that Friday afternoon, they really do have the plants for the wholesale trade they serve exclusively.

NEXT YEAR'S CONVENTION IS GOING TO BE HELD IN CINCINNATI! Everyone get ready to come. It will be held, no doubt, during either next February or March (1949). The exact dates will be published in the next issue of the Magazine. That gives everyone plenty of time in which to groom the very finest plants of new varieties of African Violets to enter in the non-competitive exhibit that will undoubtedly be one of the interesting events of next year's Convention.

The Secretary Reports

On May 22 the Second Annual business meeting was called to order with 46 members present.

Several changes in the Constitution and By-Laws as to the duties of the various officers were acted upon, and it was recommended that they be published in full in a future issue of the magazine.

Article IX. Local Chapters was changed to read as follows:

Article IX Local Societies

1. This society shall encourage the organization of local African Violet Societies, that may be known by such name or other names, in different sections of the United States and other countries. These local Societies shall be entirely autonomous in regard to their form of organization, management and operation. They shall be encouraged in the holding of regular periodical meetings of their members for the discussion and consideration of the propagation, growing and orderly exhibition of African Violets through the medium of local or regional exhovits and shows.

2. The members of such local Societies may become individual or sustaining members of this Society and are thereby entitled to enjoy the rights, benefits and privileges of such memberships in this Society.

3. The annual dues of the members of all local Societies shall be as prescribed in in Article IV of these by-laws.

NEW OFFICERS

Left to right Mrs. Wangberg, Mrs. Radtke, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Pochurek, Mr. Edens, Mr. Merkel.

An operating budget of $3,000 for the calendar year was decided upon, and Mr. Boyce M. Edens treasurers report was accepted and authorized published in the magazine. Mr. Edens report is as follows:

Financial Statement

For The Period

October 1, 1947 to April 30, 1948

Balance In Treasury	
September 30, 1947	$1,160.22

Income

Membership Dues	$1,846.20
Receipts from 1947 Violet Show	1,299.00
Registration Fees 1947 Convention	379.00
Sale of Advertising Space in Magazine	61.10
Sale of Back Issues of Magazine	11.00
Total Income	$3,596.30

Expenditures

1947 Violet Show	$1,193.22
1947 Convention	94.03
1948 Convention	61.59
Postage	88.16
Stationery and Printing	116.12
Telephone and Telegrams	37.09
Publishing and Mailing Magazine	624.14
Miscellaneous	67.02
Total Expenditures	$2,281.37

Balance in Treasury	
April 30, 1948	$2,475.15

It was recommended that the editor of the magazine be permitted to spend up to $500.00 per copy for the printing and mailing out of the magazine.

Mrs. Kellar announced that Mrs. Arthur Radtke had extended an invitation to the Society to meet again in Cincinnati in 1949. Applause and enthusiasm of those present indicated unanimous consent. Mrs. Kellar appointed Mrs. Radtke as General Chairman for the 1949 Convention.

Tribute was paid to Mr. W. D. Holley and the members of the classification committee for their splendid work on the classification of the older varieties of Saintpaulias. Mrs. Kellar announced that those members of the committee present had met, and accepted the report at a meeting May 21. In retiring the committee the president expressed her thanks and appreciation and that of the Society for their faithful service.

On recommendation of the Board of Directors the Society voted to set up a Registration Committee similar to that of the American Iris and Peony Society.

Following this came the election of officers. New officers for the coming Season are:

President, Mrs. Robert Wright,
4030 McCalla Ave. Knoxville, Tennessee
1st V. Pres., Mrs. Arthur Radtke
3334 Orion, Cincinnati
2nd V. Pres. Mr. William Merkel
1238 Maple Street, Mentor, Ohio
Secretary, Mrs. Martin Wangberg
1920 West 3rd Street, Perry, Iowa
Corres. Sec., Mrs. Frank Pochurek
14225 McCracken Road, Cleveland, Ohio
Treasurer, Mr. Boyce M. Edens
2694 Lenox Road, N. E., Atlanta, Georgia

First Report of the Classification Committee of the African Violet Society of America, Inc.

February 25, 1949

Recognizing that there are far too many varieties and that there are many varieties in the trade under several names, we have set up the following descriptions. Some of the varieties described differ very little from others. In a few instances it has been possible to say that certain varieties are so nearly alike that we refer them to the first named of that description.

Some of the difficulties which were encountered by the committee and which should be recognized in using these descriptions are:

1. The plant habit is effected by whether it is growing to a single crown or a multiple crown.
2. Leaf coloring is effected by light, soil fertility, temperature, pH of the soil and perhaps other factors.
3. Leaf size and length of petiole is effected especially by amount of light the plant receives.
4. Color of flowers is effected by just as many and probably the same factors as is color of leaf. Besides this, different persons in comparing the color of a flower to a color chart will arrive at different color classifications.
5. African violet varieties sport so freely that it is easily possible to produce several different plants from one mother plant, if minor differences are considered enough to separate them.

We have tried to avoid discussing the relative merits of varieties. How a variety compares to the others which it may closely resemble will be determined when it comes up against them in show competition. Since there are so many varieties, they should be judged in the same class if they are very similar. In this way the inferior varieties will gradually lose favor among growers.

Other descriptions will be added as they are completed. Many amendments will be necessary from time to time as we realize this list of descriptions is far from errorless. In many cases time has not permitted us to get all the details we would like to have had. We have tried to do our best in the time we have had and we humbly submit the following descriptive list.

Mrs. Pat Crowe, Rossville, Georgia
Mrs. Alta H. Decker, Cayuta, N. Y.
Mrs. W. R. Estes, Buellton, Calif.
Mrs. J. W. Freed, Feasterville, Penna.
Mrs. O. E. Kellar, Des Moines, Iowa
Mrs. Wm. J. Kiser, Birmingham, Ala
Mrs. Z. C. Layson, Maysville, Ky.
Mrs. W. H. Odom, DeWitt, Iowa
Mrs. Frank Pochurek, Cleveland, Ohio
Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Cincinnati, Ohio
Mrs. Karl Schoew, Huntington, W. Va.
Mrs. Frank Tinari, Bethayres, Penna.
Miss Fay Wilcox, New Bedford, Penna.
Mrs. Robert Wright, Knoxville, Tenn.
W. D. Holley, Cromwell, Conn., Chairman

Admiral

The medium sized plant is flat. Young leaves are deep green, growing lighter in color with age. The leaves are hairy, slightly quilted and cupped downward, measuring about 2½ by 2⅝". The petiole is light green, lightly flushed with purple, growing to about 3" long. The leaf is ovate with slightly cordate base and an almost smooth margin. Flowers are 1⅝" in diameter, in clusters of 3-5, produced very freely just at the top of foliage. Color V. 1.

Amazon Blue (See Blue Boy Supreme)

Amazon Pink

Originated as a sport of Pink Beauty. The variety is very similar to Blue Boy Supreme except that the flowers are pink. The large plant is compact and upright yet droopy. The main crown is almost always branched. The leaves are dull medium green, fluted, very hairy, slightly quilted, and thickened. The margins of the leaves are evenly crenate and distinctly cupped downward, although cupped less on older leaves. Leaves are round to ovate measuring 2½", by 2¾" or slightly larger at maturity. Petioles are thick and heavy and grow to about 3" long. Young petioles are flushed deep purple which carries into the main veins. Old petioles are light green. Flowers are sparse, 2-3 in a cluster, to 2" in diameter and produced above the foliage.

Amethyst

Also has been called Light Orchid, Orchid Beauty and Orchid Lady. The large plant is upright. The leaves are medium green tinged with purple on back of leaf. The leaves are ovate, glossy, slightly quilted, cupped upward, with toothed or dentate edge. Mature leaves measure about 2½ by 3". The petioles are rosy tinged to 3½" in length. Flowers are 1¾" in diameter, in clusters of 4-6, produced freely just at top of foliage. Color is R. V. 4 top petals and R. V. 5 bottom petals.

Bicolor

Also called Red Bicolor. The medium sized plant is upright when young but has a tendency to flatten out as it matures. Leaves are medium green, pointed, ovate-

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dentate, hairy and slightly quilted. Mature leaves measure approximately 2⅜ by 2¾". Petioles on mature leaves about 3¼", medium green flushed with red. Flowers are distinctly bicolored with two top petals medium orchid tipped wine red and lower three petals light orchid. Flowers are about 1⅜ by 1½", produced freely in clusters of 2-5, on long stems well above the foliage. Flower color V. R. 5 and V. R. 6.

Blue Bird

The plant is very upright and very large. The leaf blade is almost a perfect heart shape, deep yellow green to dark green, flushed brilliant red on the back, with deeper red veins. Even the young leaf usually has a flushed red back. The coloring of the leaf is very prounced. The surface is slightly hairy, medium glossy, and cupped downward. Mature leaves measure about 2¾ by 3". The petiole is long to 5", flushed deep red on mature leaves. Flowers average about 1½", across and are produced just at top of foliage in clusters of 4-6 at a medium rate. Color V. B. 3.

Blue Boy

The first really fine commercial African violet. The compact plant is upright. Young leaves are more or less cordate but older leaves are ovate with entire or smooth margins. Leaves are medium green with petioles and main veins flushed wine. in the young leaves only. Young to middle aged leaves are evenly crenate, cordate at base, pointed at tip and usually cupped downward at edges. Mature leaves measure 2½ by 3". Young petioles are flushed deep wine; old leaves are light green. Petioles grow to about 3½" long. Flowers 1¼ to 1½ in diameter are produced in clusters of 3-7, very freely and well above the foliage. Color B. V. 1.

Blue Boy Improved

A sport of Blue Boy with longer and larger foliage and slightly larger flowers The same general leaf description. This includes a number of sports, none of which are exactly alike so the variety is too difficult to attempt to describe. Not to be confused with Blue Boy Supreme, which has round, thick, foliage.

Blue Boy Supreme

Originated as a sport of Blue Boy. The large plant is compact. Considerable variation is encountered in this variety since it was originated in several different places. The generally accepted description is as follows: Young leaves are dull medium green with veins and petioles flushed wine. Old leaves are slightly deeper green with light green petioles. The fluted leaves are very hairy, slightly quilted and thickened. The margins of the leaves are evenly crenate and distinctly cupped downward almost all around. Leaves are usually round (about 2½ to 2¾" in diameter), but sometimes they are slightly longer than wide. Petioles are thick and heavy and grow to about 3" or longer. Flowers are sparse, 2-3 in cluster, 1¾ to to 2" in diameter and produced above the foliage. Color in strong light B. V. 1.

Blue Darling (See Blue Boy)

Blue Eyes

The large plant grows flat. Young leaves are smooth and whitish green and straight. Older leaves become flushed red with dark veins and a deep cupping. Mature leaves are smooth, glossy and cupped upward, growing to about 2½ by 3". Petioles vary from light green to deep reddish-purple and grow to about 4". Three to seven small (1-1⅛") flowers are produced rather freely and well above foliage. Color B. V. 5 to B. V. 6.

Blue Girl

Originated as a sport of Blue Boy. The large plant has a compact, upright habit. Leaves are cordate with deeply crenate edges. The leaves are medium green, darker near the edges and with a light yellow-green spot where the petiole joins the leaf blade. The round (about 2¾" in diameter) leaves are slightly hairy. Young petioles are flushed purple, old ones are green with pinkish veins on top. Mature petioles measure .up to about 4". Large flowers (1½ to 2") are produced very freely in clusters of 3-5, well above the foliage. Color in strong light B. V. 1. It has many variations as to leaf pattern such as Curley Special and Old Lace.

Blue Girl Supreme

Very similar if not identical to Amazon Blue Girl. The very large plant grows flat. The coloring of the leaf is the same as that of Blue Girl. The young leaves are very cupped while mature leaves are flat. The leaves are very thick, very hairy and very fluted. The margins of the leaves are deeply crenate. Mature leaves measure up to 3" in diameter. Petioles are large and thick, up to 3" long and veined deep wine. Flowers are 1¾ to 2¼". Color in strong light B. V. 1.

Blue Treasure

Formerly called Blue No. 3. Orgin is unknown. The large plant is upright, growing much like Ionantha. Mature leaf is dark green, quilted, hairy, glossy and ovate with evenly crenate edges. The

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young leaf is lighter green. Mature leaves grow to about 2¼ by 3". The pinkish to light-red petioles are extremely long to 9 or 10". Medium sized (to about 1⅜") flowers are produced very freely in clusters of 9-13, well above the foliage. Flower color is V. 2. The tiny veins in leaf are quite red and plainly netted.

Blush Beauty (See Blushing Maiden)

Blushing Lady (See Blushing Maiden) Also same for Blush.

Blushing Maiden

The large plant is upright. The young leaf is dark green with flushed veins beneath. The mature leaf is somewhat lighter green without coloring in the veins. Young leaves are cordate at base with crenate margins. Old leaves are finely hairy, ovate with pointed tip, but with almost smooth margins. Mature leaves measure 2¼ by 2⅞". Petiole is flushed wine-red in young leaves; little or no coloring in old leaves. Petioles grow to about 4" long. Flowers about 1⅝" in diameter are produced very freely in clusters of up to 7-8, well above the foliage on stems that are flushed winered. Color is white overlaid with blush pink, covered by Fischers Chart.

Commander (See Commodore)

Commodore

The large plant grows in a flat, tight rosette with outer leaves drooping slightly. Young leaves are very cordate, dark green and wine beneath. Mature leaves are very dark green with raised areas darker. Mature leaves are broadly ovate, glossy, extremely quilted, cordate and cupped upward slightly at the base. Mature leaves measure to 2½ by 3¾", being usually longer than the petioles. The petioles have a slight purplish flush in two distinct lines. Flowers are about 1⅜ " in diameter, in clusters of 7-8, produced freely just at top of foliage. There is a tendency to drop flowers early but this is offset by prolific blooming habit. Color V. 1.

Crinkles

The medium sized plant is flat. Young leaves are medium to dark green. Mature leaves are very dark with a brilliant wine-red back. The ovate leaves are slightly hairy, glossy, quilted and very evenly crenate. Mature leaves attain the size of 2½ by 3¼". Petioles up to 5" long are flushed lightly to deeply wine-red. The older the leaf the darker the petioles. Flowers are in clusters of 3-10, 1-1½" in diameter, produced rather freely and well above the foliage. The foliage margins and the intense color of the undersides of leaves are points of distinction. Color V. B. 4.

Dainty Maid

Originated as a sport of pink Beauty. This plant has Pink Beauty flowers and White Lady foliage. Originally called Pink Lady. The medium sized plant grows in a droopy, tight rosette. The leaves are pale to medium green, with the young leaves only having veins which are flushed wine-red. The leaves are distinctly cordate, finely hairy and cupped downward. Mature leaves measure about 2¾ by 3". The short petiole to 2½" is colorless except on the youngest leaves. The flowers may be produced in clusters up to 12 with the first flower opening in the cluster extremely large for the variety. Normal flowers measure 1½-1¾" with width slightly greater than depth. Petals are somewhat more pointed than the average variety. Flowers are produced freely and well above the foliage. Color between V. R. 6 and R. 6.

Dickson's Purple (See Commodore)

duPont Lavender Pink

Also listed as duPont Pink. Plant has a droopy habit of growth. Leaves are unusually large, medium green, hairy and evenly scalloped along the margins. The underside of leaf is usually pale green but occasionally there is a rosy tinge, Leaves are round and fluted, measuring up to 3" or more in diameter. Petioles are thick and may or may not be flushed lightly purple. Flowers are sparse but large and delicately colored a true orchid with deeper lavender around the outer edge of the petals and in the very center of the flower. A trace of darker coloring extends outward from center of flower toward ends of petals. Color R. V. 6.

duPont Blue

Foliage and habit of growth similar to duPont Lavender Pink. Color of flower B. 3.

Double Blue Boy, Double Duchess, Double Russian & Silver Wings are similar varieties

Originated probably as a sport of Blue Boy. The plant is large and upright. Leaves are dull medium green with prominent red veins underneath on mature leaves. Young leaves sometimes have reddish veins underneath. The ovate, hairy leaves measure about 2 by 3" when mature. Petioles grow to about 4" and are flushed wine-red on mature plants. Flowers are full double with 10-18 or more petals. They are usually sterile. Flowers are produced down in the foliage, very freely in clusters of 6-10. When fully open they measure ¾: 1¼. Color B. V. 3.

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Frieda

The very large plant grows in a flat, tight rosette. Leaves are dark green. On older leaves there is a light vein through center. The very smooth leaves are glossy, slightly quilted, cupped upward with almost smooth margins. The backs of leaves are dark red. Mature leaves measure 2⅜ by 3". Petioles are light green on mature leaves, red on young leaves, and grow to 6" long. Flowers are small to 1" in diameter, 4-6 in a cluster, produced freely just at the top of the foliage. Flowers are velvety. Color R. V. 1. & 2.

Gorgeous

The plant is large and upright. The leaves are very much spooned with the tops deep green and the undersides light green. Leaf surfaces are hairy and glossy, mature leaves measuring about 2 by 3" Petioles on mature leaves grow to 5" and are pale pink. Sometimes a tinge of pink shows beneath the leaves. The flowers are produced very freely, well above the foliage, in clusters of 3-5. They average 1½" in diameter and are distinctly bicolored. Color of 3-5. They average 1½" in Color of top petals V. 2.; bottom petals V. 4.

Ionantha

The original species brought into cultivation. It now is somewhat improved and varies to some extent as it has been grown from seed in many instances. The generally accepted description for the variety under this name is as follows: The plant is very large, upright yet the lower leaves are droopy. The young leaf is dark green to quite red at times. The mature leaf is dark green, glossy, quilted, has slightly serrated margin, a cordate base and is cupped upward slightly. Mature leaves measure 2½ by 3½". The petioles grow very long to 7" and may or may not be flushed wine. Flowers are about 1½" in diameter, 3-8 in a cluster, are produced very freely just at the top of the foliage. Color V. 5.

A continuation of this report will be published in the next issue of the magazine.

Mr. H. G. Harvey uses rotating system in fertilizing his African Violets.

1st Week: Vitamin B-1

2nd Week: Superphosphate - ¼ teaspoon to 1 quart water.

3rd Week: Vitamin B-1

4th Week: Hyponex - ¼ teaspoon to 1 quart water.

ACID VERSUS LIMESTONE SOIL

Phyllis Ferrall

My husband makes a great deal of sport of my hobby, but down deep, he is proud of my African Violets and shows them off to all of his friends. About a year ago I was having a bit of trouble with my tiny plants dying slow deaths. I experimented with different soil mixtures, but all seemed too acid. Healthy babies soon became sickly little waifs. My husband had been reading a great deal about the natural habitat of the African Violet, and he suggested, as long as they grow wild in their natural state in a limestone area why not use limestone in our soil.

I use Alma Wrights chick feeder method a great deal. And as long as we had just had some new limestone drives put in, I promptly put a generous layer of the stone in the bottom of each feeder, and placed the small pots on this bed. When watering I use very hot water, and these babies love the steam. After a year of experimenting I am completely sold on this method. The little plants are so healthy and bloom when very small.

When some of the anemic babies, raised under my old system get to looking too ill, I put them in the limestone trays, and in just a little while they look healthy and robust.

I have some of my larger blooming plants in these trays also and they are truly gorgeous. I have Bi-color that has bloomed constantly since last November and three weeks ago had 84 blooms on it. I have a very small Amethyst with 61 blooms and Blush has stalks of 7 and 9 blooms the size of silver dollars. So my friends, I am convinced our Violets do not do as well in acid soil as they do in sweet soil.

I have tried so many things people have told me, many times to my sorrow but I know some can have success with certain methods that others fail with completely. I firmly believe we should use a very large dose of horse-sense, a lot of love, and a little prayer with our precious Saintpaulias. I don't believe in the green thumb fallacy. I also feed once each week with sheep tea, and I am richly repaid with many gorgeous blooms.

My recipe for sheep manure tea is most simple and easy to use. Place a large handful of commercial sheep manure in a quart jar. Cover with boiling water and let stand for 24 hours before using. enough of this sheep tea is added to the warm water the violets are watered with to color it no darker than the color of weak ice tea. Never use full strength on plants as it will burn the roots.

Feasterville, Pennsylvania
August 25, 1948

Dear Club Members,

I wish to take this opportunity of acknowledging the many kind messages contained on your courtesy cards. Tho' a few members did neglect to post notification — I shall be expecting their cooperation in the future. The honor of being our fastest traveling Pigeon on this "Conductress" flight went to Unit 24, directed by Eleanor May of Ardmore, Pa. I would also like to annonce that material is solicited to help in the compiling of a second semi-annual Conductress Pigeon and it must be ready to fly soon.

Next, is an unpleasant topic — a rumor of a Cyclamen Mite epidemic. I am very sympathetic because several years ago I, too, experienced this catastrophe. However, it did teach me the value of ISOLATION. I gladly now accept the motto: "It is better to be safe than sorry", and as each new leaf or plant is added to my collection, it is completey isolated for a two month period. I formed the habit of caring for these violets last; never allow the watering spout to touch the foliage or pot; and wash my hands immediately when finished. Visitors should also be discouraged from handling flowers. I attribute my cure to the immersing of plants in a pail of water, kept at 110° F. for 15 minutes. All the while stirring gently and avoid the leaves from touching the sides of a metal container. I highly recommend this method, if done with accuracy — but a thermometer is essential. The treated plants should then be shie'ded from even direct light for several days and before replacing the posy again in the desired location, all articles that came into contact with the plant while it was infested should be disinfected. I used Lysol. To all ailing plants — I DO wish you a speedy recovery!

I am told, that this Fall — both the Life and Woman's Day Magazines will each present an article on the subject of African Violets with colored illustrations. At this time, I do not know the date of publication. We are all familiar with the Life, but some of us may not have heard of the Woman's Day, sold only at the A & P Food Stores (5¢ per copy; back numbers available by sending 10¢ for each desired copy). The author of the latter article, will be the well known Helen Van Pelt Wilson.

Now — I am going to repeat a few hints that have come my way. They all sound logical, but as conditions do vary — I advise those wanting to experiment, will use but a few plants of their most common variety first, as guinea pigs.

The Homing Pigeon

Esther Schadewald (Unit 23) reports that by dissolving 2 tablespoons of lime to 1 qt. of water (let stand 3 days) and then water with this mixture, will destroy soil pests.

Florence Sallade (Unit 21) shares with us her latest favorite soil mixture, which is as follows: "I rake fallen leaves in the same spot every year and the soil is black and loose. This can be scooped up with the hands, and then I add a good measure of dry, rotted cow manure, a little sand and ashes (but no peat moss). After my plants are potted, I continue to fertilize by using a week manure tea and rain water.

Esther Schadewald (Unit 23) reports members of Unit 4) have made worthy contributions in the form of suggesting saucers. Ethel uses plastic dishes that can be purchased in the 5 and 10¢ stores in assorted colors (price .05¢ each). While Arthur has been using, for some time, Clay Pigeons. These are obtainable at sport stores, in a quantity of 135 for only $2. They are made of a combination of clay and pitch, coated black and are attractive. Of course, they are fragile, but if treated with care are satisfactory for small potted plants. Both of these, light weight containers, are adapted for glass shelves.

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Carolyn Rector (Unit 14) sends in this excerpt. "In this section of the city (San Pedro, Calif.) most of our homes are heated wth portable open gas heaters. A method which produces a very dry atmosphere, thus causing buds to blast. A pan of water on the heater did not help. Spraying with warm water twice daily was of little benefit. Not until I put the pots in a metal window box surrounded by 3 inches of wet sand did I get blossoms. The addition of a few drops of Clorox to the water with which the sand is dampened, prevents mold". I am also deeply grateful to Carolyn for the name of Mrs. W. R. Estes: Buellton, California, who sells leaves. This should be a welcome and convenient source for our western friends, aiding them in enlarging their collection.

Trusting that I may be hearing from you

Sincerely yours,
Elsie C. Freed (Conductress)

Naturalized African Violet Show in Chattanooga, Tennessee

One of the highlights of the Tennessee State Flower Show held in Chattanooga, Tennessee on April 24 and 25 was the non-competitive and educational African Violet display staged by the African Violet Society of Chattanooga. Mrs. W. W. Cox, president of the society served as general chairmarn.

The display was a large area woodland scene arranged in the shape of the map of Africa with a high cliff and a rock bound pool measuring 12 by 6 feet. A handsome Bi-color Violet on which had alighted a yellow butterfly floated on the surface of the pool. Flowing out of the side of the cliff was a stream which formed a beautiful waterfall. Here light blue violets grew in the moss covered ground, and in the crevices and niches of the rocks near the pool, and beside the waterfall. Low ferns grew near the waters edge and among the rocks. The stream continued on from the waterfall and wound its way around the foot of a hill formed of flat rocks, and on between two violet covered banks which sloped upward, and terminated in another cliff at the far right corner of the map or garden. To the left of the waterfall was a large moss - covered mound about 15 by 25 feet in area on which the violets were naturalized in a solid bed creating a hill side of violets. At the top were Blushing maidens. Next Pink Beauties then plants in several shades of orchid graduating into deep purple and blue at the base of the mound. At the right of the waterfall was a smaller mound covered with Pink violets growing in among the rocks and ferns and in front of this was an old root stump in which gay Red Heads bloomed. Close by the stump was a fallen tree having ferns and violets growing beside it. A sunken garden filled with many varieties of the choicest plants in the display occupied the large space of level ground in front of the moss - covered mounds, cliffs and pool. Pine trees and tall ferns were used in making up the background, and the outline of the map or garden was formed by a low irregular rock wall covered with ivy and having moss and ferns growing around it.

Mr. Roberts

Import from Africa

Mr. Evan Paul Roberts, East Lansing, Michigan has been fortunate in securing in Africa and importing into this country on April 14, 1948 representative plants of three new species of African Violets. They are Saintpaulia diplotricha, Saintpaulia orbicularis and Saintpaulia tonguensis. At the same time three new varieties, Gatton Purple, Gatton Blue and Saintpaulia Ionantha, dark form was secured.

Mr. Roberts has been doing a great deal of work on Saintpaulias during the past several years, and hopes to have plants of these new species and new varieties ready for distribution some time next year. He has promised pictures and to write an article for the magazine on these new African Violets in the near future so that the members of the society may have the opportunity of acquainting themselves with these rare plants.

There are only a few species of African Violets probably only nine, while there are over a hundred varieties of Violets.

Editors Note: Please note that species are different from varieties, thus the information of new and origional specie violets from their native land may foreshadow the development of some new and different varieties. Some day perhaps, elusive yellow violetmay be a reality as other species violets are made available and work on the hybridizing of Saintpaulias is expanded.

A Report of the Growers Exhibit of African Violets at The Convention in Cincinnati, May 21-22

Jean Crowe

Of all the nice things promised at the Convention in Cincinnati I believe the Growers Exhibit was the one most anticipated, and the most eagerly sought out and poured over by all present. Not all the plants were new of course, but the majority of us were delighted to see so many whose names were familiar and the plants in bloom brought a new thrill, seen for the first time. Some were able to put names to hitherto unidentified plants in their collection, while others found to their sorrow that they did not have the true variety.

Due to the confusion in names, there are even among the most reliable of growers, some plants still going under more than one alias. However all the firms with whom I have come in contact are exceedingly anxious to have their plants correctly named, and will do so just as quickly as the names are standardized by the African Violet Society.

It is impossible to describe all the plants at the exhibit, not only because the near by Growers had quite large displays, but because many plants were not yet named. However lets stroll amoung the tables and note the comments of the crowd.

Here is the display from Merkel & Son in Mentor, Ohio. Many of these are not yet named, are only numbered. All are splendid specimens. There are many favorable comments on the new Winifred Merkel, named I hear after Mr. Bill Merkel's mother. another one attracting attention is called Giant Blue. There is no doubt that we can in future look to those who gave us Mentor Boy, for many more outstanding plants.

J. A. Peterson of Cincinnati not only had a large exhibit of plants, but he generously donated many fine specimens of these to be used as beautiful decorations on the luncheon tables, where they were much admired. His display I think was outstanding because it con tained authenticate examp les of all the original Armacost & Royston's introductions, about which there is so much confusion These original plants are Admiral, Blue Boy, Commodore, Mermaid, Neptune Norseman, No. 32, Sailor Boy, Viking and the original and true Amethyst, contrary to popular belief is lavender pink and often miscalled Orchid Beauty. Admiral too is causing much comment since few of us have the original type, also No. 32 which is still rather rare, and the much talked about Frieda.

The Tinari Floral Gardens of Bethayres, Pa. had a nice exhibit to come so far. Many are admiring the Blue and Orchid Flutes, of the duPont family and the Double Russian which is very fine. Now we stroll into the other room. Here we find from Good & Reese of Springfield, Ohio several fine specimens of the duPont plants obtained from Mrs. W. K. duPont. Everyone comments on the beautiful foliage these plants have. Silver Pink is the only one of this color, the blues vary from No. 1, the darkest to No. 5, the lightest blue. Many note the size of the flowers, some with frilled edges.

Ulery's plants, also from Springfield, Ohio are clean, healthy and beautiful, mostly familiar varieties though Blue Eyes and Tinted Lady are much admired, both are very pale blue's. Ulery's as well as Merkels have some very fine seedlings coming on, and we expect many new and fine plants from them at a later date.

Mrs. Jennie Spoutz flew in from Detroit, Mich. with some sample seedling's, but of much more interest is her promise

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of a Pink as well as Blue Basket type African Violet in the future.

Yoars House Plant Nursery of Bunker Hill, Ind. had among several promising plants, Rosalie and Red Beauty, both much admired.

All in all the exhibits were well worth while not only for the fine plants the grower's are now producing, but for the interest they are taking, and the work they are doing to develope better plants in size, color and foliage, which holds great promise for the future of the African Violet in America.

Some Causes of Bud Drop

Harriet F. Lawton

There are numerous causes of bud drop on the Saintpaulia, a few of which I have run across during my eight or nine years of their culture. These are: Gas, dry air or lack of humidity due to furnace heat and, improper soil. Let's take these in the order of their importance.

1. Gas: either caused by gas heater, gas range or gas furnace or other gas appliance. The leak of gas may be so little as to be imperceptable to the human. If a great amount of gas is in the air, the foliage will be affected, leaves will curl and become an unhealthy green, with underside of foliage even taking on a red or purplish cast in the veining in varieties not usually having such a color. Buds turn a deep purple, (almost a black) and drop before opening. Have any gas appliance checked by the gas company for leaks. Often one will allow the gas to be turned on so as to escape before lighting, or a faulty pilot light may cause a leak. In my own case we could detect a gas odor from the furnace. The gas company was summoned and found six or seven bad leaks in the pipes leading from the furnace. These were sealed. One test for detecting gas is by the use of a fresh carnation. If gas is present, the flower will curl up and "go to sleep". If there are no gas leaks in evidence, make sure the equipment is kept clean so far as the pipes and burners are concerned. Coal gas can also be injurious. If all these points have been considered and buds still drop, then go on to the next step. Gas does not always make the growing of house plants impossible although it bears serious consideration.

2. Dry or low humidity due to furnace heat: Having sufficient moisture for plants is vital. This can be accomplished in various ways, such as through steam caused by cooking, if plants are in a room adjacent to the kitchen or having radiator pans either attached to the radiator or bowls sitting on top of the radiator with water kept in them at all times. I do not feel however, in an extremely dry house, that one of these in a room affords sufficient moisture. The more plants one has in a room, the greater the humidity. If porous pots are used, there is much evaporation through the walls of the pots. The moisture is taken up into the air One of the best methods of increasing humidity however, is through watering by the Constant Water-Level. (for directions on this consult this magazine, Vol. 1, No. 2) Through this method of watering there is a constant aura of moisture about plants at all times. The humidity of the surrounding air will vary somewhat with the existing outside humidity as recorded from day to day.

3. Soil: Type of soil is important. This last but by no means least, has come to my attention only recently. One group of plants was continuing to have bud drop for no apparent reason. Each step was done according to Hoyle. The soil was a rich, black, fibrous loam purchased from a local greenhouse, considered the best for the purpose. Finally an analysis was made of this soil as well as one from another source, by our State Experiment Station. The black loam tested PH 6. 2, too acid for the Saintpaulia. And, it ran too high in Nitrogen content or soluble salts, meaning that it had been too heavily fertilized. I was advised that this can cause bud drop. Planted in this mixture, the tops of the plants were very healthy but the roots too small for the size of the plant. The other sample of soil which was tested, tested a PH 6.9 nearer to neutral. I was advised to change my plants to the less acid soil and with the lower nitrogen content. This I did and they have responded beautifully. Large blossoms, more rapid growth and a quantity of buds is the result. It may seem strange to consider soil last, but unless one can be sure of no gas leaks and unless the air can be made fairly humid, the chances of raising flowering plants would be slim. So, unless you are sure of your soil, consult your State Experiment Station, have an analysis made and seek their advice. This service is free for the asking. Merely testing soil for acidity or alkalinity is not sufficient, as too much or too little of any given element can cause trouble. Your State College will then advise you what to add to your soil in order to give your plants a balanced diet.

Violet Adventuring

Mrs. Guy Sutton

I've had such a grand time with African Violets that perhaps my experience is worth sharing.

Two years ago in August, I had a surplus of iris and offered them, through our newspaper, to any who would come for them. Among those who came was a dear little old "alone" lady. She arranged to come after the iris later and asked if there were any flowers I wanted. Did she have an African Violet? "No", she said. so I thought no more about it. When she returned, she brought me a "hothouse" Blue Boy. THAT was the beginning of the Fever.

Now, I must have a white and a pink! There was an offer in the newspaper in November for exchange, of a pink violet for lily bulbs. To complete the exchange, the owner of the bulbs and I met on a street, each wearing a chrysanthemum for identification. Since then she has become the dearest friend I have, and we share every violet we get.

This Spring this friend and I visited an "African Violet Robin" friend, Mrs. Nora Fonbuena, who wrote an article for the Violet magazine, and saw her 1200 plants. What a gorgeous sight they are! There I first saw, and fell in love with, Blue Eyes. She gave me a rooted Kewensis which now has six babies.

In April Mrs. Fonbuena came to visit me, bringing me a plant that is a sport of Bi-color, but not enough different to name. For growing and bloom it surpasses even Blue Boy.

The "violet fever" now had such a firm hold that I had traded other house plants and "hardy" plants here, there, and everywhere for more leaves. At one time, the postman brought me twenty leaves of as many varieties.

A plan I have tried for rooting leaves which has been very successful is to put vermiculite in a baby food can, with holes punched in the bottom, set in water until saturated, then put leaf stem down in it. The depth I find best is about one and a half inch. At this depth the new plants grow roots of their own instead of the parent leaf having all the roots. I then set it on a shelf in a North window and invert a Mason jar over it. When babies begin to push up, I work the vermiculite back and leave them until they are about one and a half inches tall. I then move vermiculite back more and slip off the babies, leaving the leaf to grow more. I had a leaf that had six babies, then later four, and still later one. At this point the leaf got broken off from the roots and I repotted it in vermiculite. It now has two babies, making thirteen to date and is still a healthy leaf.

However, it now is not under the jar, because the jar began sweating so much from heat and excess moisture I was afraid to leave it. This method is ideal in Winter, but I have had equally good success setting the cans on sand and keeping it moist for Summer rooting.

In brushing the leaves to remove dust there is danger of scattering "bugs", etc. I take mine to the sink, hold in one hand, and sprinkle with a clothes sprinkler and warm water until the leaves look clean. I prefer evening for this, for then I need not worry about the sun getting on a wet leaf.

Photo by Ross Hahn

There are now fifty-seven named varieties in my collection, but of course, after culling there will be fewer. However, I feel sure of fifty, as they have been checked.

One plant I haven't seen mentioned in any African Violet articles is "Royal Sunset". Last year a friend sent me a leaf. Now, two friends and I each have a large plant from this leaf which is a mass of bloom. It has very dark leaves and the bloom is a shade between Blue Boy and Ionantha. It is also called "Too Purple". Perhaps it is only an older one under a new name, but it gets the Ohs! and Ahs!

A neighbor had a sick bunch of plants and brought them to me. I didn't know what was wrong, but knew Rotenone would kill outside bugs, so I poured some in a dish and made a "sloppy paste", completely covering the leaves. A friend told our nurseryman about them and he said "Cyclamen mite", and that the Rotenone

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would do no good! I now have a good many saved from the batch and not a sign of bugs. That was over a year ago. Now, if my plants get any bug and I can't get "special sprays', I'll try Rotenone, of course isolating them first.

Lest you think I always have perfect success — I waited nine months for a leaf to put up a plant. When it did there was one sickly plant. I nursed it along for another six months and now a bloom has opened. It isn't what it was labeled, but one of which I have dozens! My husband thinks it quite a joke. Well, I can laugh at that, too!

This just merely touches the grand adventures, the many friends, and the real joy my African Violets have brought me. Why so grand? Because — no two plants ever act alike, no two leaves ever send up the same number of babies at the same time, the same variety in the same window is never just the same!

What more could one ask for high adventure and for making friends?

Photo by Ross Hahn

AFRICAN VIOLET SEED

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The All-Wise God who from the Stygian Night

Brought order out of chaos and gave light
And gentle warmth from his created sun,
Looked on His work and found this task well done.

And yet I think He must have looked afar
To some bright planet or a brilliant star
And dreamed that, in the future, His great Plan

Would find a fullness in the works of Man.
So is it, that in every human heart
Those who love beauty yearn to have a part

To make the desert blossom and the bare
Land bring forth a greater loveliness, to share

With God who in His lonely Outer Space
Dreamed we might have on earth a heavenly place.

Written for and dedicated to
AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY
OF AMERICA
Ollie Reeves
Atlanta, Georgia
Oct. 9, 1947

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Tray and 2 Brackets

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Midwest African Violet Exhibit

"The First Midwest African Violet Exhibit sponsored by the Omaha African Violet Club, Inc., was held in the Craft Room at Joslyn Memorial, Dodge and 22nd streets, Omaha, Nebraska, April 24 and 25, 1948. With attendance from 24 different states and an estimated figure of 7500 visitors, the hours of the show had to be prolonged to accomodate the violet enthusiasts who had to wait in lines for hours.

Mrs. J. W. Hofman (left) and Mr. Raymond Gain (right) exhibit chairman look over plants to be exhibited at the show.

The Exhibit was conducted on a national basis. There were 64 different varieties on display. A commercial display was staged by Mr. Raymond Gain (Faulkner Florist) of Omaha, Nebraska. The novelty table received many comments and won 3 ribbons for Mrs. J. W. Hofman. The exhibit in all made the people of the northwest conscious of the newest hobby and acquainting them all with the different varieties of Saintpaulias.

The judges were from the neighboring state. Mrs. Arthur Pyle, of Russell, Iowa, Mrs. Harry Baird, Boone, Iowa, and Mrs. Perry Howard of Atlantic, Iowa.

Prize awards as follows;

1st - Mrs. C. C. Andersen, 2459 Larimore Ave., Omaha, Nebr.

2nd - Mrs. W. P. Danhke, 5611 Newton Road, Merrian, Kansas.

3rd - Mrs. A. F. Nordgren, 3924 No. 42nd St., Omaha, Nebr.

Best plant in the show (Orchid Beauty) Mrs. C. C. Andersen.

Best multiple plant in show (Double Russian) Mrs. J. W. Hofmann.

Plant from greatest distant point Mrs. W. P. Danhke, Merrian, Kans.

Each day door prizes of plants and books on African Violets were given away.

Mrs. O. E. Kellar, President of the African Violet Society of America Inc., was the honored guest. Mrs. Martin Wangberg of Perry, Iowa, Regional Vice-President assisted with exhibit judging. Mr. R. G. Baxter of Youngstown, Ohio flew to Omaha for the exhibit. Mrs. E. G. Bristol, of Lincoln, organizor of Clubs in Nebraska attended the two days. Mr. Ralph Deitrick and Mrs. J. H. Hoffman of Des Moines. Iowa accompanied the guest of honor.

The displays were arranged against a back ground of silver and light blue which gave a pick up effect for the many varieties on exhibit. Arrangements of several hundred beautiful roses against an extreme back ground of palms enhanced the appearance of the Craft Room and lent a very festive and decorative air to the show. Native African Murals were displayed on the walls.

Much credit for the success of the show goes to Mr. Raymond Gain who did an outstanding job as Exhibits Chairman.

Mrs. J. W. Hofmann is the president of the Omaha Society which was organized in November 1947.

Exclamations of delight were as plentiful as the flowers at the first annual Mid-West African Violet Exhibit at Joslyn Memorial. A spokesman for the five women judges said judging "was never like this." Judges included (left to right) Mrs. W. H. Fitzpatrick (wearing orchid), 5611 Hickory Street; Mrs. A. A. Pyle, Russell, Ia.; Mrs. Pery Howard, Atlantic, Ia.; Mrs. A. P. Kilmartin, 4900 South Fourteenth Street, and Mrs Harry Baird, Boone, Ia. They are shown examining the winning "novelty class"- entry from Mrs. J. W. Hofman.

Huntington, West Virginia Show

Members of the Huntington, West Virginia African Violet Society opened their first show April 10 and 11 on the second floor of the womans club in conjunction with the 1948 Narcissus show. In addition to the exhibits of choice blooms by the members of the club, Taylor's Florists displayed a group of plants including some 28 varieties. Judges were Mr. & Mrs. Warren Gottshall of Alexandria, Virginia. Judging was based on the following points: leaf pattern, size of bloom, color and condition.

The best plant in the show was a Blue Boy entered by Mrs. Hugh Mullarky. Winners by classes follow:

Multiple crown; Mrs. Ralph Hron, first; Mrs. Jesse Alspauch, second, Mrs. H. W. Crowder, third. Blue boys and blue girls; Mrs. Hugh Mullarky, first, and second, Mrs. Ralph Hron, third. Dark blue shades; Mrs. H. W. Crowder, first, Mrs. O. K, Walker, second and third.

Light blue classes; Mrs. Roy Woods, first, Mrs. Mullarky, second and Mrs. Charlie Hughes, third. Pink and light lavender; Mrs. Mullarky, first, Mrs. Woods, second, Mrs. Crowder, third. Dark orchid and plum; Mrs. M. N. McCormick, first, Mrs. Crowder, second and Mrs. Mullarky thirdand honorable mention.

Mr. and Mrs. Warren Gottshall of Alexandria, Va., were the judges of the first annual show of the African Violet Society of Huntington, West Virginia.

Tea and Exhibit at Oak Ridge

The Oak Ridge, Tennessee African Violet Society held a tea and violet exhibit on Thursday afternoon, May 13th from 1:30 to 4:30. The violets were concentrated in the home of Mrs. John Murray, Society President, and tea was served at the home of Mrs. James Scott directly across the street from Mrs. Murray. Guests attended by invitation only, each club member having invited 5 of her friends. This first exhibit was very successful and we were only sorry more people could not see our display. Perhaps we can do our next on a larger scale, and open it to the public. About 175 blooming violets, comprising some 60 varieties were shown in novel and unusual arrangements. 65 guests called during the afternoon. Officers of the Society are

Mrs. Murray. Pres.
Mrs. M. K. Walsh, V. Pres,
Mrs. St. John Davis, Corr. Secy.
Mrs. Robert Orr, Rec. Secy.
Mrs. Arthur Bowman, Treas.

Enthusiasm for violets is so great here in Oak Ridge that our group is now organizing sections.

On June 23, the Ionantha Section was organized and perhaps by the time this goes to press we will have started another section. Our plans are to have each section composed of 12 members. Twice a year all the sections will meet together. Each section will have its own officers but there will be in addition a President of all sections — she will be the guiding hand! We feel that we have done right well in the 7 months we have been a Society!

Richmond, Indiana has Second Show

The African Violet Society of Richmond, Indiana held its second Violet Show on May 14 and 15 at the Second National Savings Bank of Richmond, Indiana.

Many visitors attended the beautiful display of 170 choice plants representing 34 varieties which were entered in 6 classes.

Saintpaulia admirers from 32 surrounding cities were registered, and showed most enthusiastic interest by asking questions on violet culture and for information about the different varieties in the show.

Mrs. Earl Mutchner, President and Mrs. Pearl Fitzsimons, Secretary announce that so successful was the show this spring the members are making plans for another show to be held in the fall.

Editors Note: Send your Club news to Maxine Wangberg 1920 West 3rd. Street, Perry, Iowa. She is your Club News Reporter.

African Violet Show in Alexandria

Historic Gadsby's Tavern in Alexandria, Virginia was the scene of the first African Violet Show ever staged in that section of the country. The show was open to the public from 1:00 P.M. until 8:00 P.M. on May 22nd under the sponsorship of the Metropolitan African Violet Club and the Xi Gamma Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi Sorority for the purpose of raising money to be donated to a fund for Cancer Research.

For a "first" of its kind in the Metropolitan Area of Washington, D. C. and the first show of any sort ever staged by the sponsors, the exhibit comprised of 159 beautiful plants in 65 varieties, was well received by the public and aided greatly in furthering the interest of Saintpaulias in the immediate locality.

Due to the number of varieties entered it was necessary to make awards by color group rather than by each of the varieties represented by a small number of plants. Judging was in the capable hands of Mrs. R. R. Blackburn of High Point, North Carolina and Dr. Freeman Weiss, Washington, D C.

A beautiful silver compote, courtesy of Mr. R. G. Baxter, Youngstown, Ohio, was awarded to Mrs. W. Duff Wilson for her Mentor boy judged "Best in the Show". Mrs. O. H. Murphy won, as the second prize, a silver pie knife - also donated thru the courtesy of Mr. Baxter - for her multiple crown plant of Mentor Boy. Ionantha grandiflora won for the Warren Gottshalls a collection of plants donated most willingly by the Tinari Floral Gardens of Bethayres, Pennsylvania.

Ribbons and Honorable Mentions for each of the groups set up were awarded as follows:

"Multiple Crowns"

1st — Blue Boy — Mrs. Geo. K. Klipstein

2nd — Amethyst — Mrs. Avery Rawles

3rd — Blue Boy — Mrs. Geo. K. Klipstein

Honorable Mention — Blue Boy — Mrs. I. Richards

Blue Boy Supreme — Mrs. Rawles

Blue Girl — Mrs. Rawles

"Dark Blue & Purple Shades"

1st — Neptune — Mrs. Martha Husted

2nd — Viking — the Gottshalls

3rd — Viking — Mrs. Husted

Honorable Mention — Blue Darling — Mrs. E. H. Toms

"Lavender, Lilac, Pink and Orchid Shades"

1st — West Coast Amethyst — Mrs. Hazel LaMar

2nd — BiColor — the Gottshalls

3rd — Bicolor — Mrs. J. Raymond Hoy

Honorable Mention — Pink Beauty — Mrs. Klipstein

Lavender Lady — Mrs. Toms

"Seedlings and Un-known Varities"

All awards by the Gottshalls

"Rose & Light Purple Shades"

1st — Trilby — Mrs. Toms

2nd — Red Head Girl — Mrs. Wilson

3rd — Trilby — Mr. Karl Peterson

Honorable Mention

Strauss Orchid — Mr. Peterson

Red Head — Mrs. LaMar

"Whites and Off-White"

1st — White Lady — Mrs. H. E. Bufkin

2nd — Blushing Lady — Mr. Karl Peterson

3rd — Blushing Maiden — John & David Gottshall

"Light Blue Shades"

1st — Blue Eyes — Mrs. May B. King

2nd — Crinkles — Mrs. LaMar

3rd — Blue Amethyst — Mrs. King

Honorable Mention — "Seedling" (Erroneously placed) — Mrs. Toms.

Three prize winners Alexandria show
2nd. Prize Mentor Boy Mrs. Murphy
1st. Prize Mentor Boy Mrs. Wilson
3rd. Prize Ionantha-Grandiflora Gottshalls
In background, "Natural Setting" Mrs. Fombuena

One plant of Ruffles drew a lot of attention, in spite of the sparseness of open blossoms, because of its large size and beautiful foliage. Blue Eyes also had her share of attention because of her beauty and the fact that a mature plant of this variety is rather a rarity in the section. Two other plants that drew a lot of "Oh's" and "Ah's" were those labled "Strauss Orchid" and "Red Amethyst"; and well they should for both are deserving. The Strauss Orchid has a beatiful foliage as well as blooms and the Red Amethyst,

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though still small, had lovely dark spooned foliage and very dark and decidedly red-purple flowers. A quilted leaf, pale orchid and an almost bicolored very pale lavender seedlings drew a lot of favorable comment along with another blue seedling - the latter seemed to draw its praise from the prolificness and size of its blooms as there was little else to class it as a distinct, or different variety.

The "crowning achievement" of the entire show, however, was a miniature "natural setting" beautifully and artistically arranged by Mrs. E. M. Fonbuena on a large wicker tray. The arrangement contained, among many things, ferns, honeysuckle, "Lady Slippers" African Violets, rocks and moss, Mrs. Fonbuena could not have done as well had she dug up, in its entirety, a three-foot section of any dense "primeval". Nature, in this case, was put to the task.

Show at Greenville is Outstanding Success

The African Violet Show sponsored by the Greenville, South Carolina African Violet Club and held at Sears Shelter April 20 was a successful undertaking which will be long remembered by the more than 1000 who attended.

Mrs. W. G. Grigg of Sylva, N. C., believing that the early bird catches the worm, was up at 4 o'clock getting her Amethyst ready for the trip, and she won the award for the most perfect specimen.

Mrs. Winder Gary of Seneca won the sweepstake prize, taking six blue ribbons on her Viking, Admiral, Myrtle, Purple Prince, Double Russian and Blue Bird.

Executive Board of Greenville African Violet Club Left to right Mrs. Lee Harris, Mrs. J. Frank Hudson, Mrs. Claude E. Russell, President, standing, Mrs. John Rainey, Mrs. C. W. Scales, Mrs. J. B. Easterlin, Mrs. Joe Robertson

ARRANGEMENTS

In the special arrangements blue ribbons went to the following: Mrs. J. B. Easterlin, whose white porcelain cart with donkey brought home a Blue Girl; Mrs. C. E. Russell's lovely arrangement with well; Mrs. M. Lee Hunter's wooden bowl arrangement, and Grady Williams rolled out the barrel and took home a blue.

Mrs. M. Lee Hunter with her wooden cart loaded with violets won a red as did Mrs. J. Frank Hudson's porcelain stork.

Three yellow ribbons went to Mrs. M. Lee Hunter with her arrangements in a bamboo log, Mrs. Claud Iller's bellboy and Mrs. Claude Russell for her girl stand.

Mrs. M. R. Pickler won a white with her coffee table arrangement.

OTHER AWARDS

Mrs. J. Frank Hudson of Greenville won four blue ribbons on Double Duchess, Pink Lady, Red Head, and Blue Scoop.

Mrs. M. R. Pickler, three on Silver Wings, Blue Girl (Multiple Crown) and Mary Wac.

Mrs. Hugh Garner, Greenville, Blue Boy, Neptune and Red Head.

Mrs. Nellie Halsell, Norseman and Orchid Beauty.

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Mrs. C. J. Major, Greenville, Bi-Color and Gorgeous.

Mrs. J. K. Lominack, Spartanburg, Trilby and Sapphire.

Miss Annie Laurie Lowe, Greenville, Blue Amazon and Heavenly Blue.

Mrs. J. W. Brabnam, Greenville, Spoon Neptune.

Mrs. E. B. Nash, Greenville, Blue Girl.

Mrs. O. W. Sutton, Greenville, Blue Boy.

Mrs. F. E. Donald, Greenville, White Lady.

Mrs. H. E. Stewart, Greenville, Pink Lady, (Multiple Crown).

Mrs. R. L. Prince, Greenville, Pink Beauty.

Mrs. A. C. Black, Belmont, N. C., Mentor Boy.

Mrs. A. B. Forrester, Greenville, Red Head.

Mrs. J. R. Childress, Greenville, Neptune.

Judges were Mrs. A. M. Chreitzberg of Spartanburg, Mrs. Arch Walker of Spartanburg and Mrs. Neva Turner, Route 5, Greenville.

Knoxville Exhibit

The Knoxville Saintpaulia Society had their exhibit in the Green Room of the Y. W. C. A. on April 8.

It was well patronized by the public with some 900 visitors during the eight hours it was open, some of them driving as much as 100 miles, which certainly shows that mention African Violet and you have a crowd.

This exhibit consisted of a variety of ways to use African violets even to a propagating table and hospital for sick and ailing plants.

On the shelves of a built-in book case which was lined with white crepe paper, several different varieties were displayed, all in full bloom and good foliage, some large and some small, some of the containers were tiny antique coffee cups, low bowls, attractive modern pottery containers. On the top shelves the plants were turned at angles, even on their sides to show them to their best advantage. This made a very picturesque scene with pinks, purples, blues, reds, bi-colors and whites. Below this case several wrought iron stands were placed holding large plants profusely in bloom.

On the classification table one of every variety that the club could make available was displayed which consisted of around 90 varieties. This display was attractively shown on tables with three tiers covered with a cool shade of green cloth.

A breakfast table done in pink antique china on white linen using a Pink Beauty Violet caught the eye of many visitors.

Another feature admired by many was a tea table, using a lovely antique lace cloth with bands of ribbon handpainted. A beautiful plant of lonantha in a brass teapot was used for the center piece. Brass candle holders, with candles of the same shade of green as the ribbon in the cloth were placed on each side.

A natural woodland setting was arranged on a large tray using moss, old pieces of worn limbs of trees with ferns and small wild plants. Two plants of African Violets were used in this display, one Pink Beauty and a Blue Eyes.

All methods and steps of propagating were shown on the propagation table including different potting material that could be used.

On the hospital table, plants with disease that could be found showed the symptoms and results. A hostess was at the table to offer advice on how to control and rid your plants of these diseases.

Many large showy plants were used on smaller tables, on window ledges, in wrought iron stands and etc. to make the display attractive.

Last, wooden posts with large square bases were wrapped with white crepe paper, winding ivy around the posts. Wide white, satin ribbon was stretched from post to post using a bow at each post. These were placed a few feet from the displays to keep the Violets from being handled, but also added much beauty to the exhibit.

The Springfield, Missouri chapter of the African Violet Society, under the sponsorship of the Red Cross has undertaken the voluntary project of creating interest in African Violets at the O'Reilly Veterans Administration Hospital. The club, whose membership totals 50, hopes to present each of the 460 patients with a beautiful blooming plant as well as leaves and other sized plants they will need to learn their care and propagation. The local florists and seed stores have cooperated heartily by furnishing, free of charge, large supplies of pots, vermiculite, fertilizers, peat and other needed materials.

The patients are showing great interest and the club members are having a great experience when, dressed in surgeons uniforms, they show the boys how to care for violets.

Officers for this group are Mrs. John Miller, Pres.; Mrs. A. H. Hass, Vice Pres.; Mrs. J. D. Armstrong, Sec't.; Mrs. Shelby Roney, Treas.

Experiences with "Fermate"

Regina and Warren Gottshall

Saintpaulias are not only subjected to attacks by insects but are, unfortunately, the prey of diseases and fungus in various forms. The fungus which can, in some instances, cause rot, either to crown, leaf or petiole (stem) is, according to some authorities present in all potting soil; however, they do not take their toll on plants that are in healthy condition until something happens to the health or physical features of the plant. The plant can be weakened from a variety of causes - lack of water, too much of it, fertilizing, starvation or injury (either in separating or by the removal of leaves, suckers or bloom stalks).

Taking them in order - Lack of water - when this condition exists the plants are called upon to support themselves on the moisture and nutriments existing in the plant itself - naturally the turgescense of the plant is greatly lessened and with it goes the life or "backbone" of the plant and a weakened plant is the result. This is the case when leaves or suckers are cut for rooting as a great deal of support comes from the life already stored within the leaf, or sucker, until roots are formed to do their natural work and thus relieving the strain on the material rooting. A plant thus weakened is subjected to any kind of attack.

Over-watering — when this condition exists the fungus present in the soil has an excellent chance to multiply for the natural home of these spores is in moisture — during dry spells they lie dormant. Extended dry spells may possibly be their death (and probably that of the plant). Removal of leaf, suckers or bloom stalks at this time leaves an open wound giving access to the fungus spores and rot sets in.

Over-fertilization — too much of a thing can be as much of an evil as entire lack of it. With over-fertilization the plants are "forced to death", as is the case with a lot of weed killers that work on this principle of over-stimulation; or, the plant itself can be mortally burned from too much contact with the fertilizer. Even in strength there is weakness and in this case over-fertilizing eventually causes a weakened condition as an obvious result.

Starvation — When the plant has used all the "food materials" in the soil and receives no new diet, either by repotting or fertilization, it can do nothing but weaken and eventually die — like a fish out of water, its very existence is gone.

Injury — as above mentioned the separation of plants, the removal of leaves, suckers or bloom stalks, leaves an open wound. When separating it is quite frequently the case that a few, or many, of the roots are broken and the "open wound" is present. Entry of the fungus spores is only too possible under this condition.

In combating fungus diseases Fermate seems to be the answer. No doubt there are countless other counter-agents of which we have had no experience (our only trial was with this product) so we lay no claim to Fermate being the only "medicine".

. At one time seed had been sown upon the top of a pan of vermiculite watered with a popular fertilizer and vitamin B1. In due course the seed germinated and simultaneously cobwebby mold completely covered the top of the vermiculite. The seedlings were completely smothered but we had the opportunity for our first experience with Fermate. According to directions received we mixed ¼ teaspoon to a pint of warm water with soap added as a "spreader". Considerable shaking was necessary, it is true, before it was "ready to use", but when sprayed upon the vermiculite the mold completely disappeared within two days, with only one application.

Another experience had to do with what we term "stem rot". A plant persisted in drooping its outer leaves and upon examination showed that the base of the petiole was starting to rot where it joined the crown. There was no obvious fault to be found with the crown itself and the roots were whole and healthy. As an experiment the lower leaves were all removed and the entire crown exposed was then painted with a dry camels-hair brush dipped into the straight Fermate The "stem rot" condition has not reappeared since that time and the plant stopped drooping leaves.

A report received (which was our first introduction to the use of Fermate) related of an experince with "leaf rot" (so identified by a greenhouseman). The plant in question developed soft brown spots upon the leaves and the advise was to use the above mentioned Fermate spray. The spots dried up — true they caused an unsightly appearance to the plant but there were no new marks putting in an appearance. (The greenhouseman also advised that all their seed flats are sprayed one week after sowing to prevent "damping-off" rot).

From personal observation we can speak of two other instances. One had to do with a leaf received through the mails in perfect condition. The leaf was "firmed" for a few days in water contain-

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ing Hyponex and vitamin B1 and then potted. Within a day or two after potting rot started at the side edge of the leaf and within another two days had nearly reached the central vein of the leaf itself. This rotted spot was "painted" top and bottom with straight Fermate and the next day had dried to a hard brown scar. The rot had stopped; this was a month ago but it yet remains to be seen whether the leaf will survive enough to produce plants although it looks better and is more firm than it was when the rot developed. The second case had to do with a group of seedlings that had been individually potted. In about a dozen cases moss, or mold, appeared upon the top of the soil and a pencil point, dipped into Fermate was used to "rework", or loosen, the soil on the top. Again within a very short time the mold and moss had disappeared and after five or six weeks has not made its reappearance.

Fermate may not be the answer to these problems but for us it has worked and we can do naught but "swear by" its effectiveness.

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East Huntington Club Makes Debut.

The East Huntington African Violet Club of Huntington, West Virginia, which was organized June 10 with a charter membership of 13, announces the election of the following officers for the coming year:

President: Miss Alma Harrison
Vice Pres.: Mrs. Cora Barrows
Secretary: Mrs. A. A. Criddle
Treasurer: Mrs. Tom Willey
Publicity: Mrs. W. E. Lucas

October Exhibit in Battle Creek

The Battle Creek African Violet Society will hold their September meeting at the home of Betty Manaweck, Breezy Bluff, Gaguac Lake. In addition to the regular program there will be a Chinese Auction of plants to raise funds toward the exhibit planned for October.

Springfield Society.

At the second meeting of the African Violet Society of Springfield, Pennsylvania the following officers were elected:

President: Mrs. R. J. Schadewald
Vice Pres.: Mrs. J. Victor Turner
Secretary — Mrs. Phillips Filing
Treasurer: Mrs. Wallace Collum

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The African Violet Magazine

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COVER DESIGN: Blue Boy Supreme

Photo by Ross Hahn

A handsome plant of compact growth, with heavy fluted leaves and extra large, dark blue - violet blossoms of velvety texture.

The Editor Says:

Dear Members: Will you please notify us if you are not receiving your copy of the magazine? Or if you know of someone who is not receiving theirs. We will never know that you are not getting it unless you tell us about it!

As you will notice we have different printing on the front of the envelope this time. We are doing everything within our power to see that you receive your copy. A routine check is made among a certain number of members each time to see if they are in receipt of their magazine. We will be most grateful if you sign your card, and return it promptly.

The members of the staff listed above all serve without compensation. Many hours of their time are given to the making up of each issue of this publication. We will appreciate your cooperation and assistance in providing us with your correct address if we have your address listed wrong, your new address if you are moving, or in notifying us at once if you have failed to receive your magazine!

Suggestions as to subject material for future issues will be very welcome. Your club reporter, Maxine Wangberg, will be happy to receive your club news, and will forward it to the editor.

If you have had an unusual or interesting experience in growing your African Violets, may we invite you to write an article for publication? Contributions are used as space and make-up will allow.

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Each article sent in cannot be published in the immediate next magazine, but will be used from time to time in future issues. Do let us hear from you!

Your next magazine will be mailed to you on or about March 1st to 10th, just before the convention. It will contain in addition to convention news, articles by members of our regular staff, a number of other interesting articles, including some practical information about cyclamen mites by Neil C. Miller and Earl T. Baker, Variegateds by Phyllis Ferrall, New Life for Old Plants by Ruth Walsh.

Do you know of a business firm or a grower whose products you have used and found reliable? Pass the good word along. We would like to solicit their advertising.

The turn of the year is here bringing with it promise of newer and finer varieties yet to come. Whispers come to us of new introductions for 1949. A successful Saintpaulia year is just ahead.

To all members, our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Sincerely,
Alma Wright

Advertising rates are $3.00 per column inch.

The African Violet Society of America, Incorporated does not necessarily endorse the advertising appearing in this magazine.

The African Violet Magazine is published quarterly by the African Violet Society of America, Incorporated and is entered as third class matter at the postoffice, Knoxville, Tennessee.

The President's Message

Appreciation

I am deeply grateful for both the opportunity and the honor that has been mine for the past two years in the very pleasant service as your President. It seems such a short time since a mere handful of amateur growers of African violets from six different states East of the Rockies met in Atlanta, Georgia in November 1946 to attend the first really large and inclusive African Violet Show. It was my privilege to be one of this group. I know its past history, but it is always interesting to recall not only this small group of enthusiasts who became the first Charter Members of the Society, but also the huge crowd of local people who attended the Show. There were more than 8,000 of them.

This magnificent display of well-grown African violets and the great manifestation of interest in this our favorite house plant really inspired the launching of African Violet Society of America. Since then, the Society has grown from just a few Charter Members to our present total of 1,355 members who live in every state in the Union, in a number of foreign countries and in our neighboring Dominion of Canada. We continue to grow, steadily, and before long we will reach the 2,000 mark. I genuinely appreciate this splendid, healthy growth that has taken place during the past two years of my administration.

I appreciate, too, the progress the Society has made in its initial effort to classify by name and description many of the varieties of African violets that are now being grown in this Country. We have, as I have indicated, only made a reasonably good start in this large and continuing task. Already certain of our Officers and interested Members are carefully considering how best to take the next progressive step in the part of this task that is ahead of us, i. e., the establishment of an Official Plan of Registration, through which all the different varieties and species of saintpaulias can be registered with the Society, by name and description, from time to time in the future. For all of this I am most grateful, because a practical and sound plan of Registration is almost sure to be the best means through which the duplication of variety names, now causing so much confusion, can be prevented.

Then, too, I appreciate the many fine and enthusiastic local African Violet Clubs and Societies that have sprung up in every part of the Country during the past two years. These local groups are helping, no end, to popularize the growing of African violets by an ever-increasing throng of flower lovers throughout the Country.

I am particularly thankful for the ever-growing spirit of generosity back of the sharing of leaf-cuttings from a large number of different varieties of African violets by amateur growers on a really widespread basis. It's a most popular gesture, as well as a helpful service, to exchange leaf cuttings. This action tends to greatly increase the distribution of the different varieties to many collectors and to the host of beginners throughout the Country.

My earnest thanks is also extended to the many trustworthy commercial growers of African violets in every part of the United States. They have done so much to increase and improve the number of different varieties, and will naturally continue to perform this very helpful and necessary service in the future. Certainly I commend all such commercial growers to our members and to the vast African violet consumer trade. It should be a pleasure, as well as a profit, for all of us to patronize them.

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Growing African Violets in Nutrient Solution Commonly Called "Hydroponics"

Harry S. Houghton

African Violets and other house plants are not easily grown in a small steam heated apartment in the center of Boston where the light is poor and the winters are long and cold. If you are one of those unfortunates who must take business trips requiring you to be away often, sometimes as much as a month or more at a time, there is an added problem.

This article is written with the thought that others may have a similar problem and my method of reaching a solution may be of assistance.

We have all known for a number of years that plants can be grown without soil provided they are furnished with food which is generally supplied by soil. Fo d consumed by roots of p'ants must be in solution.

Soilless growing of plants, flowers and vegetables, is called "Hydroponics" and has the advantage over soil growing of eliminating all soil diseases, overwatering, not watering sufficiently, wrong type of soil and the many insects that live and come from the soil.

A number of different methods can be used in growing flowers without soil. It is not possible to discuss all of them in this short article. Therefore I shall describe only three of the major methods.

When living in a land of sunshine and warm climate the raising of flowers does not present the problems encountered when living in a cold climate of long winters and a little sunshine, particularly if you do not have any yard and only a few windows in your living quarters.

Several times I had African Violets well along, in one instance twenty-two different varieties, when it was necessary to take a trip. Practically all violets were dead upon my return. My last effort was to try "Hydroponics" and be sure the system was fully automatic.

There are three methods of growing without soil: SAND CULTURE; WATER CULTURE; and SUB-IRRIGATION. These are well discussed in detail in several books. I studied "Soilless Growth of Plants" by Ellis and Swaney, second edition, revised and enlarged by Tom Eastwood, Publishers Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 330 West 42nd St., New York 18, N. Y., 1947.

THE SAND CULTURE METHOD

The plant is placed in pure sand (which is merely a means of support) and then pour water containing chemical elements around the roots. These chemicals are the food and fertilizer which are supplied by the soil when raising them in soil.

With this method it is possible to set up a great number of inexpensive types or systems of operation either inside or outside of the home. You will have freedom from soil diseases; roots can grow larger and breathe easily; plants can be removed or transplanted without injury; and sand is a good strong supporting agent.

Growing African Violets in Nutrient Solution
Commonly Called Hydroponics

THE WATER CULTURE METHOD

This method has many advantages and can be used to raise flowers and vegetables on a very large scale.

The plants must be supported by some means and the roots hang into the solution. The roots must be aerated. This can be accomplished by removing the plant every day and allowing the roots to hang in the air for a few moments or supply a means of pumping air into the solution continuously, or allow the solution to fall or drip or drop through the air.

SUB-IRRIGATION METHOD

This system is the same as the sand culture with the exception of the method used to feed the chemicals to the roots.

Plants are placed in a container containing sand which furnishes the support for the plant. The chemical is pumped up through the sand from a storage and allowed to drain back into the storage.

It is interesting to note that the occupational armies of the United States in the South Pacific and Japan now are living on vegetables raised in Hydroponic Gardens. Many thousands of tons of vegetables are raised.

Because of the small quarters and the necessity of going away often it was decided to use in our apartment the Automatically Operated Sub-Irrigation Method.

A cabinet was designed and built. It was painted by an expert so it resembles an antique.

Dimensions of cabinet are approximately 12 inches wide, 44 inches long and 33 inches high. The tank containing the sand and violets slips down inside of the top until flush so nothing but the sand can be seen and this of course is later completely covered by the plants when they grow in size. On the front are two doors which open up and swing out of the way so a bottom storage tank can be placed inside the cabinet directly below the top tank containing the sand. The bottom tank is some 10 inches shorter than the cabinet thus allowing space at one end in which a small motor driven centrifugal pump is placed with the necessary rubber tubing, check valves and connections so the pump can take the solution from the storage tank and pump it up through the sand of the top tank and drain back into the storage tank ready for the next cycle.

In this same space is placed an electrically operated time switch which turns the pump motor on and off three times a day. In each instance the switch allows the pump to operate ten minutes before turning it off.

The liquid runs down into the storage tank through an overflow pipe which is set so the solution covers the crowns of the violets on each pumping. Two small holes in opposite corners in the bottom of the top tank allow the solution to completely drain from the sand into the storage tank in approximately thirty minutes. These two holes are covered with a piece of broken flower pot so the sand will not come through the hole. Air is drawn into the sand as the solution drains out, thus aerating the roots. The bottom tank is far enough below the top tank so the liquid drops and is also aerated.

The cabinet is mounted on rubber tired, ball bearing castors and can be moved from one room to another, also turned so the plants may have the light from the windows reversed from time to time.

The cabinet is self-contained. No tanks, parts or pump are visible when the doors are closed. You merely plug into any base plug and the automatic device is in operation. The consumption of electricity is less than a two watt light burning one-half hour per day.

The African Violets are beautiful; large, healthy and with no diseases or insects. A leaf can be placed in the sand and six months later a beautiful plant is in full bloom. We go away and leave the apartment for several weeks and the flowers are taken care of for us automatically.

When the pump is in operation the sand is, of course, saturated with the solution which causes it to be in a mushy state. At this time you can remove a plant or leaf and place it wherever you wish and no harm is done. Suckers are removed easily, in fact you can rearrange plants or do anything you wish, they respond beautifully.

"AFRICAN VIOLETS"
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Watering by the Constant Water-Level

Harriet F. Lawton

Editors Note: Because of many requests for more specific information this article has been re-written with added details and illustrations.

There are various drawbacks in the keeping of house plants, especially during the winter months when windows are closed much of the time.

Of course one element is gas and that is no mean consideration. However, if gas is used, it does not necessarily prohibit the growing of house plants. Take precautions though and raise plants as far away from burners as possible; and, check for leaks. The gas company will do this for the asking.

One of the main considerations in house plant culture is extremely dry air due to furnace heat during winter months. Plants need some fresh air daily, but they particularly need some moisture in the air. Most of our houses are far too dry and humidity can only be replaced artificially to make up for what is removed by furnace heat. There are numerous ways in which this can be done; Place water pans on radiators or elsewhere in the room; the greater the number of plants kept in a given area, the greater the humidity; or one may increase humidity by daily sprayings. (Saintpaulias will take it providing the water is warm and if sun does not shine on leaves when wet.) But, I have found by far the most satisfactory way is by watering by the constant water-level where an aura of humidity surrounds the plants at all times.

Watering in this way is being advocated by many State Colleges and greenhouses and is considered by them the most up to date method of plant care. Wick watering is also by capillarity but with the constant water-level, one may care for a number of plants at one time. I will explain the setup which I have used quite satisfactorily and this has overcome the difficulties described above for me and others who have tried it. An article appeared on this in Vol. 1 No. 2 but is being repeated here for the benefit of those who were not members at that time and includes one or two improvements as well as illustrations. Directions and equipment are as follows:

Step 1, Figure 1

Metal pan. (rustless metal or rust preventive inside) 33" long x 7" wide x 6" high. Must be at least 6" high. Other measurements can be adjusted to meet one's need; space into which it must fit or size of pots to be used.

Step 2 and 3, Water-Conductor, Figures 2, 2a and Figure 3.

2 Metal - non rust. A metal strip 4¼" wide x 31⅞" long or 1⅛" less length of tank. Bend strip in center lengthwise to a better than right angle degree. All three dimensions should be approximately the same; the two solid sides and the space at the bottom. The height of the water-conductor at its peak should be 2" from the center bottom. This is important only insofar as it furnishes an ample water supply.

3 A piece of metal 9" x 6". Have this the height of tank and 2" longer than the width. Cut notch in the center of the long way to match in angle to that in step # 2, having the two 1" ends facing toward the end of tank. Solder these two parts together, but do not fasten water-conductor to tank. (leave it free). This makes a pocket or well through which one waters. (see illustration.) Illustration shows water-conductor 1" below top of tank. I have found however this is a mistake as it does not make full use of the capacity of tank and will have others made as directed above.

Step 4, Figures 4 and 4a.

Gadget for leveling sand. This is made of a strip of wood of about 1" square stock with a piece of sheet metal screwed to it. Wood should be cut about 4" longer than width of tank. Sheet metal should be an easy fit inside width of tank and in height measures below wooden strip, 3" less height of tank. Example: Tank as shown is 6" high. 2" of pebbles and 1" of sand on bottom total 3". Therefore, metal strip must be 3" high below wooden strip. (Figure 4a)

When the above directions have been carried out, fill tank as in step 5.

Step 5, Figure 5

1. Place water-conductor in pan with about 4 of the wooden plant markers at intervals crosswise under the water-conductor. This raises it slightly to permit a free flow of water.

2. 2" of pebbles or to top of water-conductor.

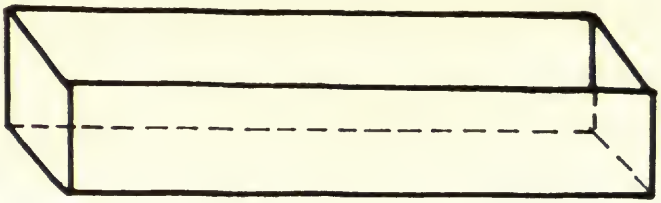
3. 1" of coarse sand. *See note.

4. Porous pots with plants. **See note.

5. Sand half way up on outside of pots. (Pots sunk in sand.)

*After the 2" of pebbles and 1" of coarse sand have been put in, flood the sand or make it "soupy". It is more easily shifted about in this way. The sand should then be leveled off with the gadget as shown in step 4. After the sand has been leveled off, draw off excess water by use of a rubber tube and creating a vaccuum. (This is done by starting the flow of water through the tube by use of a syringe.) Make sure when sand is packed down with water removed, that there is still a full inch of sand above

Fig 1. Metal Pan



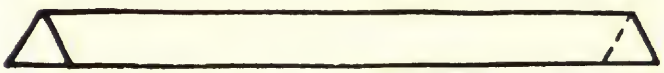


Fig 2. Water Conductor

Fig 2a. End View

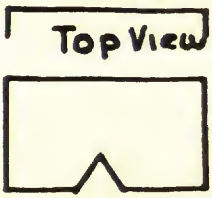


Fig 3.

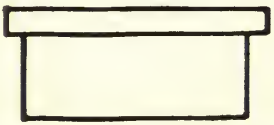


Fig 4. Sand Leveling Gadget

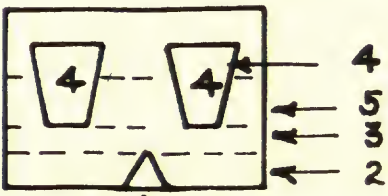


Fig 5.

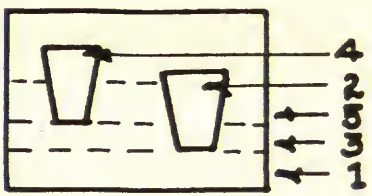


Fig 6.

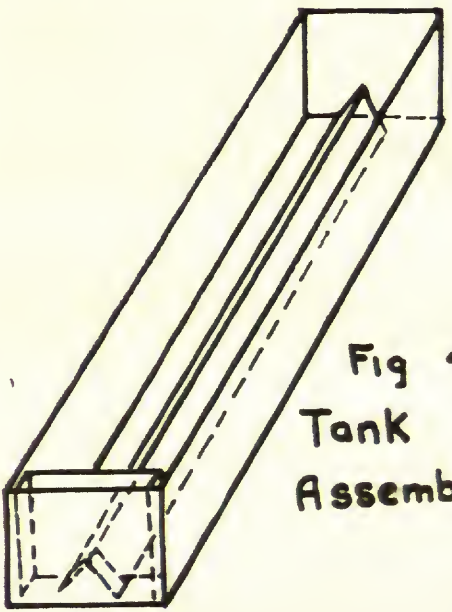


Fig 4a. Tank Assembled

Continued on Page 8

pebbles or 3" in all. Place pots with plants as indicated in step 5 and put more sand about them. Flood again, smooth sand over and drain off water until water is at top of water-level. The amount the pots are sunk in sand depends on a number of things; the coarseness of sand, the porosity of pots, (some pots are more porous than others) the size of pots and the amount of moisture in the surrounding air. For instance, the top of a 4" pot is further away from the sand upon which it rests than a 3" inch pot. A pot indoors in winter needs to be sunk in sand further than one the same size on porch in summer. One can keep 2" and 3" and at times even 4" pots on porch in summer merely resting on top of sand. Outdoor conditions are such that as a rule the pots will absorb some moisture through the walls of the pots. The important thing is to have the water-level just 1" below the bottom of pots. Situations and conditions vary and one must work out their own particular needs. If top soil about plants dries out or does not maintain an even moisture, start building up around pots with sand until it does.

**Drainage in pots: Have one piece of crock over hole to permit an entrance of air to the root system.

Caution: If plants are being kept too wet, the leaves will turn a rather sickly yellow in the center of the crown. Also, roots kept too wet cannot keep healthy. By keeping the root ball too wet, the supply of air is somewhat cut off from the roots. This comes from sinking the pots too deeply in sand when there is sufficient moisture in the surrounding air or, in keeping the water level less than an inch below the pots. If these center leaves start to turn yellow, the situation is easily rectified (if taken in time) by having less sand about the pots. The plants will respond readily to this adjustment. One must work out their own growing conditions.

Size of pots: Much has been said about the fact that the Saintpaulia does better if over potted; that it does not need to be potbound as is the case with so many plants for good blooming. But, you will surely come to grief if you overpot plants that are automatically watered. By having all this extra earth about the roots, it makes for keeping the earth too wet. The plant cannot tolerate it. Water through well at end of tank until water comes to top of water conductor. Check water daily. If kept on porch during summer, let up on water supply for a day or so in case of a prolonged damp spell. If, at any time any pots should dry out on top, water well from top to re-establish capillarity.

Fig. 7 Step 7

Continued on Page 9

ROOTING LEAVES OUT OF DOORS IN THE GARDEN

Ruth Noel Walsh

I give my big violets a "Haircut' every once in a while. When the outside leaves become too straggly or yellow, or the plant loses its symmetry, I remove the leaves until I have the size and shape I want. It does not harm the plant and, I believe, induces more and bigger blossoms.

Early in the spring I had some "Blue Boy" leaves which I had removed from an old plant. I gave away as many as I could and still had some left. I did not want to root any more so, what to do with what I had left! I just could not throw them out and I decided to try to root them out of doors in the garden.

On the south side of the house, shaded by large oak trees, we have some bridal wreath bushes. Under one of these, where the soil is good and loose, I stuck the leaves, firming the soil around the stems which were about one and one-half inches long. There is a small forsythia bush in front of the leaves so that no sun could reach them and not too much light.

No extra care or water was given them except occasional sprinkling when we thought the bushes needed it.

Two months later little plants had appeared. It was interesting to see them under the fallen leaves from the bushes and trees showing that a violet leaf needs very little light to root and form new plants.

There are more than two plants from each leaf. The leaf rotted away but the small plants have grown steadily.

I am going to leave two plants out all winter. The rest I will bring to our garden club to give the members. I am almost sure the plants I leave out will freeze, but I want to find out how much cold a violet can stand.

I will try covering one plant with a glass jar, the other with leaves. Next spring I will let you know what results I have.

Paper Pots —

A friend reports success with using a paper pot inside a pot or jardinere to grow violets in. Care must be taken not to over water, and let the soil get soggy.

— Kay Duerstling.

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WATERING BY THE CONSTANT WATER-LEVEL

Continued From Page 8

Feeding: Give same plant food as usually used in the same amount at one feeding but about half as often. Have soil damp at time of feeding but with-hold water for a day or so before feeding. Remove pots from pan and pour plant food on in solution. Use warm water. Replace pots in pan and start watering after a day or two.

When pots are sunk in sand a seal is created about the pot after the second flooding of sand. This seal must not be broken as the sand must come in direct contact with pot. If this seal is ever broken by turning a pot or having to remove it temporarily, pour water about pot to create seal again.

Resting period: Do not rest plants watered in this way but carry them along in the usual way. With-holding plant food at the time they let up on blooming is the only form of rest they should have.

Step 6 instead 5, Figure 6 Alternate.

1. 2" of pebbles.
2. Empty porous pot. (Well)
3. 1" of course sand.
4. Porous pots with plants.
5. Sand about pots.

This method was given in Vol. 1 No. 2. See diagram. If one finds it impossible to equip their tank with a water conductor, they may use an empty, porous pot as a well through which to water in place of the water conductor. The hole in this pot is filed out to make a large opening. Pot rests on top of pebbles. Water through this. I used the empty pot for some time with success but gave it up in favor of the water-conductor. The difficulty in using the empty pot is that the water supply does not flow so freely. It takes longer for the water to percolate amongst the pebbles as the air about the pebbles prevents the water from flowing down through the pot freely when one waters. Therefore, such an even water-level is not always maintained.

Step 7.

Shows the use of a shallow pan for small plants or even before the new plantlets come up. Such a pan can be as shallow as 2½" and a pan 30" long will accomodate a great many small pots. The water-conductor is only 1" in height, (have pebbles just to top of this) and 1" of sand on top. These small pots need not be sunk in sand. Pots 2" to 3" can be used and you should see them grow!

Saintpaulia Idiosyncrasies

Arthur Chard

If there is a changeling in the horticultural world the Saintpaulia is it without question. It is the most unpredictable and, in some respects, unreliable specie of plant life. I know of no other plant that can have as many "whys" asked about it with little or nothing for an answer. Perhaps this is responsible, in part, for its universal appeal.

The sketches will help bear out this claim. Illustration #1 is of S ionantha grandiflora oddity with plants growing at intervals along the petiole. #2 shows small plants growing at the veins on the back of the leaf. #3 is from a Blue Girl which bears small plants on the front and back of the leaf. A leaf of Blue Perfection received thru the mail arrived with about an inch break across the center of the leaf, completely severing the midrib. The leaf was planted and in time produced a double crop of plantlets. Five came naturally from the base of the petiole beneath the surface of the rooting medium. Four other perfect little plants were born upon the midrib of the leaf at the break. The five produced at the base of the stem grew more rapidly than did those from the break. When reaching a manageable size they were removed and potted separately and the leaf with its four parasites was replanted. The rootless plants were allowed to remain until they were about 1½ inches tall (mostly because they had been produced upon the underside of the leaf and had curled due to improper lighting. When the leaf was potted for the second time it was reversed, i. e. underside up, and the plants soon straightened). The quartet were then removed and placed in vermiculite for rooting.

Oddities? Probably not when we realize that many, or probably all, such cases are due to injury (either accidental or intentional). Nature is merely taking advantage of the injury by using it as means for reproduction.

There still remain many other idiosyncrasies not explainable - by the author at least. Illustration #4 shows a small plant which has started from a Ruffles flower scape. I believe this is quite frequent with Ruffles but it does occur from time to time on many other varieties as well. Is the explanation for this reproduction as well? Are Saintpaulias naturally trailers? Should they produce "runners"? Has there been a cross somewhere between S. ionantha and S. grotei (of the creeping stem and supposedly not yet introduced into the United States)?

A White Lady once sported a normal petiole up to about two inches in length where it branched into two stems and each bore a normal fullsized leaf. Yet other plants will bear Siamese stems, i.e. joined the entire length but bearing two separate and distinct leaves at the ends. Two small plants, one each of Blue Girl Supreme and duPont Lavender Pink, produced one perfect funnel shaped leaf apiece. Incidentally the funnel leaf of Blue Girl Supreme was put down into vermiculite nine months ago and to date has produced nothing but roots.

Why do they deviate from the normalcy of the accepted five lobed blooms to have four, six, eight or the doubles? One bloom of Blue Girl on a scape with five other normal flowers had six lobes all the same size but so ruffled as to give the flower quite a double appearance. Pink Beauty, White Lady, and perhaps others, will occasionally turn their blooms topsy-turvy and bear the three lobes at the top and two at the bottom.

Two plants of Blue Bird raised from the same leaf, potted in the same soil and fed the same solutions were placed side by side in the same shaded, south window. One remained the same as all other Blue Birds but the other spooned to such an exaggerated condition that there was barely room for a lead pencil between the rolls.

They will produce varigates and albinos. They will sport, they will spoon, produce red backs, bloom, or refuse to bloom. They will grow gloriously for some people standing in water but here generally get one watering a week (two if time permits) and the saucers emptied after a few hours.

Pink Girl carried a sucker not distinguishable from Pink Beauty both as to leaf and bloom. No fluting, no creamy mark no full round blossom.

These are a few idiosyncrasies recalled at the moment. Doubtless you can think of many more but has anyone an answer for it?

A little soot dug in around the top soil of your Saintpaulias will deepen the green of the foliage, and the color of the blossom — Kitty Lee Richards.

Do not expose newly planted leaves to strong sunlight.

Aid to Blossom — 1 teaspoon of super phosphate in 1 quart of warm water. Super Phosphate is one of the best fertilizers to supply phosphorous quickly. Phosphorous stimulates plant growth.

2.
4.
3.

Cyclamen Mite and Broad Mite and their Control

Pauline E. Wyland

(Some of this article is based on information by Dr. Floyd Smith, Sr. Entomologist, of the U.S.D.A., Washington, D.C.)

African Violets (Saintpaulias) are like babies: feed them good; give them light; drinking water, and clean faces; and they will grow for you. Yes, they, too, have their own illnesses.

Their most common illnesses (or pests) are: MEALY BUG (Psuedocaecus sp.); CYCLAMEN MITE (Tarsonemus pallidus Banks); TWO SPOTTED SPIDER MITE (Tentranychus binaculatus) and BROAD MITE (Tarsonemus latus Banks).

The mealy bug can be seen easily, and can be readily destroyed. But the cyclamen mite (1/64-1/32 inch long) and the broad mite are so small that a 14 x lens, which is the most powerful movable lens, has to be used. A stationery lens that magnifies higher is much more desirable when looking for the mites.

"Damage by the Cyclamen mite has been confused with another apparently unreported malady known as STUNT. This damage on a plant resembles one that is injured by the mite. Tho by closer observation, one can find distinct differences. Florists, at one time, thought a stunt-affected plant and a cyclamen diseased plant were the same thing."

"The leaves of a plant affected by stunt are shorter, broader, thicker and more brittle. The edges are erased or reduced, and are rolled upward, exposing the lower part of the leaf, and are more noticeable on younger leaves, altho in some cases, these leaves are nearly flat. The top surface is almost smooth or shiny, because the fuzziness is much finer and about ½ the length of that on normal leaves. The leaves are pale green, and the center vein near the base of the leaf and the streaks around it are yellowish green. Generally there are no flowers, but if so, they are about 2/3 as large and have short and narrow petals. The stems on both flower and leaves are short and thick. The cause of stunt is not known, and propagation from a stunted plant should not be made, as the newer and younger plants from propagated leaves will develop stunt."

"Cyclamen mite lays 1 to 3 eggs a day", and when it is hatched has 3 pair of legs, but soon acquires another pair, so it is classed with the spider group.

"The egg is smooth, oval and transparent and is laid in crevices. The larva is white, long and narrow and moves slowly. The adult female (a sucking insect) - - - Fig. 1, is a little larger and milky white, long and oval shaped. It, too, moves slowly."

Cyclamen mite, sometimes called the pallid mite, can be brought into the house by the use of garden soil that is infested with mite. This mite attacks delphinium, snapdragon, chrysanthemum, old garden dahlia, lantana, petunia, geranium, verbena and of course, cyclamen. They can live outside during the winter months, also in discarded flower pots and stakes. So to be sure that the soil you use is not infested, it is wise to sterilize it and the flower pots.

"All leaves on healthy African Violets have crenated margins and all except the old mature leaves are moderately thin, soft and pliable in comparison with leaves on diseased plants."

"Cyclamen mite develops slowly and does not quickly kill the new growth. So when the violets are infested, the outer and older leaves are normal, but as the mites hide in the young leaves in the center, these leaves are dwarfed, and edges are usually (but not always) cupped upward, - Fig. 2, and this prevents the leaves from developing normally. This is more noticeable on the young leaves than on the old ones. The pubescence (extreme fuzziness) on these injured leaves is much denser and more cottony, than on normal leaves; and are usually brittle, but are not thickened, and

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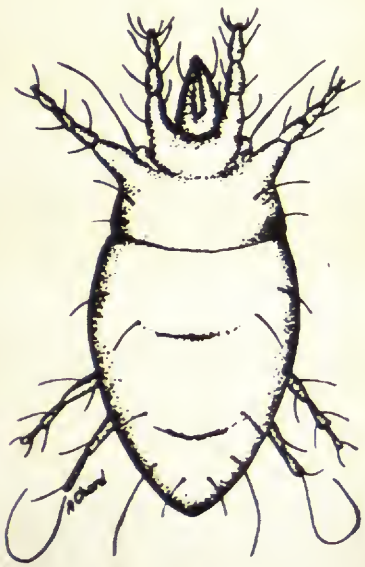


Fig. 1 Tarsomemus pallidus
Adult Female, much enlarged

Figure 2

MITE INJURED LEAVES

Illustrations by Arthur Chard

have a puckered appearance. Flowers on slightly diseased plants may be discolored and distorted, but in the more advanced stages of the disease, the flowers more often drop off before they open, as the mites feed in the very tip growth in the tiny flower buds."

(The distorted leaves and flowers also are caused by near starvation and poor soil)

"Cyclamen mites are often found ½ inch or more below the soil surface, but they do not feed on the roots. They are generally checked by the higher temperatures and lower humidity of summer, but become plentiful and cause more damage in fall, winter and early spring on other plants; but severe injury can be seen at any season on African Violets, as mites continue to breed on plants all year around. They must have living plant tissue to eat, in order to live; they also die when confined to soil alone, or to dry or moist decaying plant tissue".

"The mite spreads readily from plant to plant, if the plants touch each other. In an experiment, they had infested plants 12-18 inches apart from healthy plants for 4-6 months, and healthy plants did not become diseased."

You also can spread mites when handling the diseased plant if you are not careful. Always wash your hands after you have come in contact with a diseased plant or leaf. Be very careful with the tools you use, such as shears, watering-can, etc. You should scald them if you use them on both the diseased plants and the healthy ones. It pays to burn a severely damaged plant, and the container should be disinfected with boiling water right away.

Sodium selenate, a comparatively new soil treatment is very effective for the control of these mites. It is a good preventative insecticide which also helps to keep other insect pests under control. Dissolve 1 gram of sodium selenate to 1 gallon of water and water 4-inch pots twice, 2 weeks apart, with 3 oz. of the solution poured carefully into the soil. If any is spilled on the foliage, it should be rinsed off immediately as it damages the leaves. It should be applied about 3 times a year. Sometimes the chemicals ooze out at the upper edge of the pot. This may be prevented by carefully rubbing parafin around the upper edge of the pot. Sodium selenate

Continued on Page 14

IS A DEADLY POISON AND IT SHOULD BE USED WITH EXTREME CARE. The soil thus treated should not be used for growing vegetables. It isn't safe to use this poison if there are children in the home.

The new material Tetraethylpyrophosphate used at the rate of ½ teaspoonful to a gallon of water will control this pest as well as the others mentioned earlier, apparently without injury to the plant. This material is very toxic to animal life and should be handled with caution. As yet it is only available in large amounts under various trade names such as Vapatone, Killex 50, and Aphamite.

There are other sprays and dusts, such as naphthalene flakes (paradichlorobenzene), nicotine sulphate, cryocide compounds, DDT, rotenone, N.N.O.R. Spray, Optex Spray, pyrethrum, sulphur dust, Black Leaf 40, Loro Spray, and cyanide fumigation (this is extremely dangerous, as it is deadly poisonous). But commercial growers have failed to control the mite on African Violets with these methods, but have successfully used the hot-water treatment in home-made tanks. This treatment will not help stunt-affected plants.

If the plant is properly treated by the hot-water treatment, you can propagate it, if so desired, by leaf cuttings or divisions.

"The cyclamen mite perhaps does the most damage, but the broad mite (a closely related form) has been found to be on the same plants with the cyclamen mite".

"Until 1928, the broad mite was classed as a tropical species, then this mite was found on tobacco and tomato plants in greenhouses. Both the cyclamen and broad mites were found on the same plants, and on different plants in widely separated part of the country. Probably the broad mite has been in greenhouses for some years but was confused with the cyclamen mite".

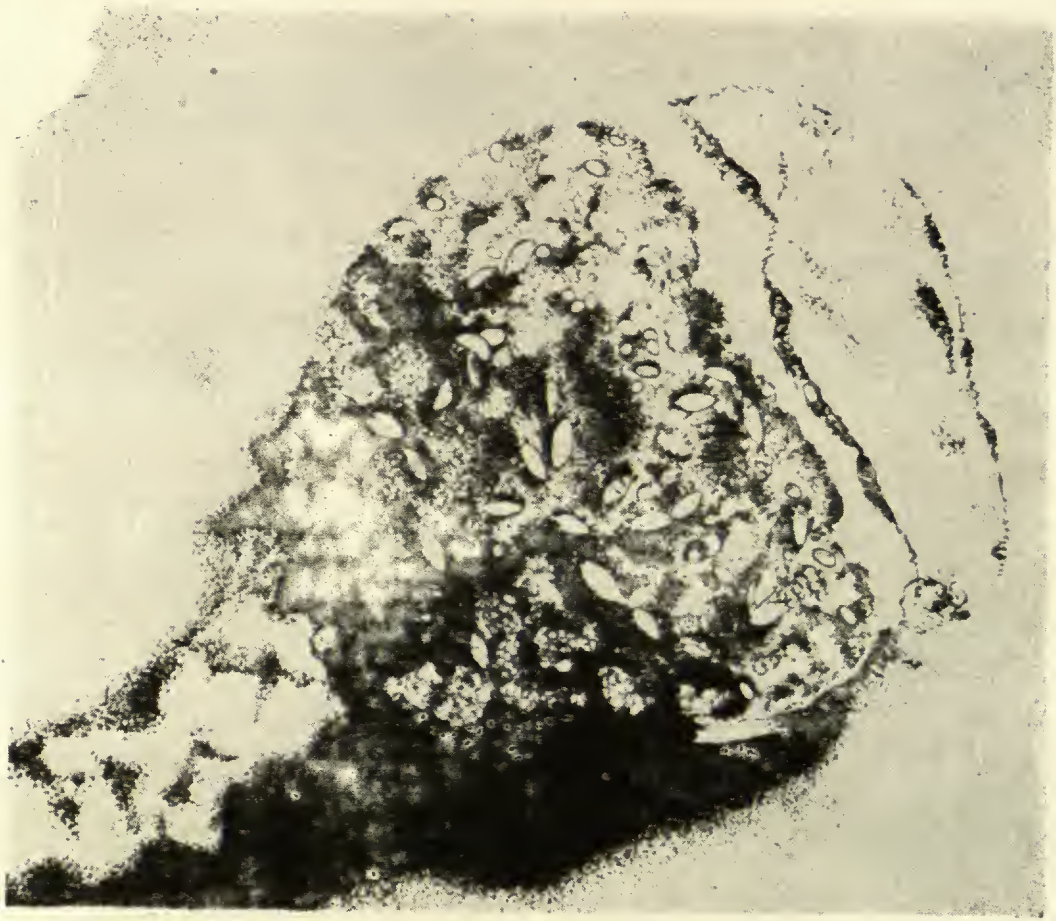
"The egg of the broad mite is pearl colored, nearly round, with rows of white spots on the surface; usually flattened against exposed leaf surfaces. The larva is white, smaller, short, broad and moves more rapidly than the cyclamen mite."

"The adult female is milky white to brownish; smaller, short, broad, and it, too, moves more rapidly; usually on exposed under surfaces of leaves."

"It lays as many as 7 eggs a day, and likes a much higher temperature than cyclamen mite, but like the cyclamen mite it continues to breed on plants the year around, and will die if confined to soil alone, or in dry or moist decaying plant tissues.."

"This mite can attack plants that are more than 18 inches apart, and feeds on the lower surface of the more fully developed leaves. This interferes with the normal growth of the lower surface and causes a puckering down of the leaf, rather than curled. Tho it does not enter the plant crevices as often as the cyclamen

STUNT INJURED LEAVES



EGGS AND ADULTS OF MITES ON STAMEN OF FLOWER, KILLED IN PLACE BY HOT WATER TREATMENT

mite, it does extend to the surface of tender petioles, stems and buds, and stops further growth; the buds drop off or the leaves are prevented from growing and appear as small scales, and the plant becomes stunted. The damage by the broad mite is more prominent than by the cyclamen mite."

'The broad mite affects the plant suddenly and spreads rapidly to other plants, while the cyclamen mite spreads more slowly. The broad mite can be controlled by dusts, sprays or fumigation, or by the hot-water treatment. Finely powdered sulphur will stick to the bodies of the larvae and adults and kill them within a few hours. The eggs hatch but the larvae are killed by contact with sulphur still on the leaves if it's not washed off. Diatomaceous earth also kills the mites dusted with it, but is less effective against the hatching larvae. Since some of the mites may not be reached by one application, several dustings should be made to get better results. The dust should be directed toward the lower leaf surfaces and should not be washed off in watering. If the plants are watered early in the day, the dust can be applied after the foliage has dried, and allowed to remain as long as possible the next day."

"This mite can be controlled by fumigation with calcium cyanide, but the fumigation must be repeated 3 times at 4 day intervals, as the mite is resistant to the gas. Naphthalene kills them in all stages but the egg, so it must be repeated 3 times at 4 day intervals, with 16 hours of fumigation with the temperature of 75-80 degrees. In tests, one application of a white oil emulsion spray containing 1% of oil, killed almost all of the mites, and 3 applications at weekly intervals gave complete control."

"The cyclamen mite is not so easily controlled by the same dusts of fumigations that are effective against the broad mite, not only because cyclamen mite is protected in crevices or distorted leaves, but because it is more resistant to some of the treatments. But both the cyclamen mite and the broad mite can be successfully controlled by the hot water treatment.

Continued on Page 16

Dr. Smith's Method of

THE HOT WATER TREATMENT

"The following suggestions may be helpful in successfully treating Saintpaulias that are infested with cyclamen or broad mites where the home owner lacks special equipment. However, the treatment should not be undertaken without an accurate thermometer that is easy to read and that is calibrated in degrees Fahrenheit. A glass chemical thermometer is available from most drug companies and chemical supply houses including the Gilman Drug Co., 927 Penna. Ave., Washington, D. C., and possibly other local firms.

If the plants are large and they are deeply set in the soil, removal of the surface layer to expose the crown will permit more ready penetration of heat. The plants are not removed from the pots for immersion in the water bath.

A small number of plants can be treated in a laundry tub or other vessel if deep enough to permit covering the plants with water. Fill the vessel with water to the desired depth and adjust the temperature to about 111° F. Fill another vessel with water adjusted to a temperature of about 120° F. This water will be poured into the tub as needed to maintain the desired treating temperature of 110° F.

Set the infested plants in the tub of water in an upright position and see that all foliage is below the surface. If several plants are to be treated they can be set in a wire basket or tray from certain cooking utensils or in a shallow slatted box. As the water cools pour in the warmer water to maintain the treating temperature at 110° F. for the full treating period. More hot water will be needed during the first part of the treating period or until the soil has been warmed. The tub should be provided with a cover, or covered with burlap to reduce the loss of heat during the treatment. Remove the plants promptly after 15 minutes, tilt them to drain water out of the tops of pots, allow to drain and set out of direct sunlight for about 24 hours then return them to their usual position. Soil particles on the foliage may be rinsed off.

The temperature of the water during treatment should be carefully controlled since too warm water will injure the plants and too cool water will not kill the mites. The hot water should not be poured directly on the plants in the treating vessel but at one side. The water should be agitated by stirring with a paddle to maintain a uniform temperature throughout the vessel. If the treatment is made in a warm room with no cold drafts there will be less heat loss from the treating bath and less need for adding hot water.

It is advisable to make a preliminary trial run without plants in order to become familiar with the quantity of hot water needed to maintain the temperature and other procedures necessary to make the treatment a success.

Precautions should be taken to prevent re-infestation of treated plants. The mites can be picked up with the fingers when handling infested plants. The mites will move to adjacent plants if foliage touches. And be sure to treat the place where the infested violets were before, by drenching it with hot water, or steam, or with an oil emulsion spray, or it may be permitted to dry off for some time to allow the mites to die. Also scald the dish or saucer on which the plant rested.

Those who have small greenhouses can treat the infested plants by vapor heat. This treatment requires a specially constructed apparatus that heats the air to the desired temperature, which is 110° F., by means of electricity or steam and at the same time completely saturates it with moisture for 30 minutes."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (Con'd.)

I am especially grateful for the African Violet Magazine, our Official Organ. The Editor, Mrs. Robert Wright, of Knoxville, Tennessee, her valiant staff of associate editors and news reporters, have done a magnificent job, so graciously, in the publication of the first five issues of the Magazine. Messages are constantly reaching us, particularly through the Homing Pigeon Department conducted by Mrs. Elsie Freed of Feasterville, Pennsylvania, expressing unanimous appreciation of the membership for the Magazine. Certainly it is a veritable storehouse of interesting and helpful information concerning the propagation and culture of African violets.

I am ever-so grateful for the magnificent group of officers who will assume responsibility for the future of the Society during next year, beginning January 1, 1949. Here they are President, Mrs. Robert Wright, 1st Vice Pres., Mrs. Arthur Radtke, 2nd Vice Pres., Mr. William Merkel, Recording Sec., Mrs. Martin Wangberg, Corresponding Sec., Mrs. Frank Pochurek, Treasurer, Mr. Boyce M. Edens. Theirs is a great competence and the Society will grow and prosper with increased impetus under their leadership and guidance. I commend them to the entire membership and ask for them your heartiest cooperation.

I conclude with an expression of my everlasting gratitude to each one of the present officers, the Regional Vice Presidents and Committee Chairman who have served with me during the past two years. Many, many thanks for your great help and in the language of Tiny Tim, " God bless us everyone".

Cordially,
Your President,
Mrs. O. E. Kellar

Meet Your District Director

(Helen Farnham)

When Mrs. Wright suggested the District Director of Region 1 introduce herself by means of a picture ,perhaps showing a favorite African violet, consternation was evidenced. Where to get the violet for the picture?

Many and varied are the opinions as to the tractability of the African violet. I can only say that of all the house plants, including some tropicals and the temperamental Calla Lily Begonia, the African violets alone showed such resentment of the unaccustomed chilling received during our move to a new location, that they promptly curled up their toes via the crown rot route. This in spite of the fact that they were thoroughly healthy plants before the move. Which makes one wonder if temperature isn't quite important. However let me say in their favor that the tops are easily re-rooted if crown rot is detected in time. And no plant takes more kindly to a re-pot job.

As to a favorite variety — how to choose? The picture is of a Blue duPont, but the duPont Lavender Pink is just as beautiful, and what of the enchanting Ruffles? While constantly one hears whispers of new and better varieties still to be introduced.

African violets have been of interest to me ever since I discovered the well known Blue Boy many years ago, in a greenhouse. For years it was the only one obtainable, and it is still a best seller! However, increased hybridization is offering stiff competition.

Many fine articles have appeared in our magazine regarding culture, and two good books have been written describing varying methods — and they do vary. If your own method of growing is successful, why change? While some advocate a very plentiful supply of water, my own experience tells me to water with a light hand, and preferably from the bottom, using water of at least room temperature. When the plant has absorbed all the moisture it will take, it is not watered again until the top soil shows light and dry.

As with so many growers an east window is favored if the plants are grow[illegible] the house. In the greenhouse comparatively heavy shading seems called for. I note this same requirement in the successful growing of another member of the family, the lovely Episcia. Too much sun or too brilliant light leads to fading and curling leaves

There seems to be quite a latitude of temperature in the higher range, but for me, at least, chilling is disastrous.

Everyone has a favorite potting soil, and I think it is rightly varied in different sections of the country where the soil itself varies. A good one for here abouts consists of equal parts of good loam, leaf mold or peat moss and about ⅓ sand. To this may be added well rotted cow manure and some vermiculite if available.

Leaves have been rooted successfully in peat and sand, sand alone, vermiculite, water, and sometimes by inserting a leaf in a pocket of sand in a light soil mixture.

My own preference is for sand. Bottom heat, easily come by in the greenhouse, makes them fairly pop along.

With good rich potting soil plants will not need additional fertilizing for some time. Hyponex has proved satisfactory but there are many good formulas on the market.

The same may be said of insecticides. Mrs. Yoars speaks of N.N.O.R. Optox has proved to be excellent also.

Often we are told, "plants do so much better in the greenhouse". Not our African violets! They are just as satisfactory grown indoors. Easily propagated, almost constantly in bloom, the African violet earns its well deserved popularity.

Best Wishes for a Merry Xmas
and a Happy, Prosperous
New Year

STARR DAHLIA GARDENS
869 Confederate Ave. S. E.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Marine

Originated as a seedling from the cross Blue Boy X Ionantha. Plant is robust and upright in growth habit. Leaves are dark green, very quilted on top with transparent deep veins on the back with seldom any color at all on back of leaf. Leaves are rounded to ovate, edge dentate, tip of leaf obtuse and base slightly cordate. Petioles which reach a length of over 6" and ⅜" in diameter are transparent green with a streak of wine running the length at certain seasons. Both the leaf and petiole are covered with very fine hairs. Flowers measure 1¾ by 2", are produced in clusters of 5-8. A very robust grower which if given the room will make a huge plant. Color B. V. 4 around the tube.

Mentor Boy

The very large plant is upright. Leaves are medium green with veins underneath rather reddish in young leaves. The mature leaf is large to 3 by 4", broadly ovate with a cordate base, slightly hairy, slightly quilted, and cupped downward slightly. The petioles grow to about 4" and are light green on bottom, reddish on top. an are light green on bottom, reddish on top. Flowers up to 2" in diameter are produced very freely in clusters of 5-8, well above the foliage. The two upper petals are long in comparison to normal flowers. Color B. V. 1.

Mrs. Boles

There are some similarities between this and Marine. The plant is very large, slightly upright but sometimes flat, depending upon light and exposure. The young leaf is medium to light green; mature leaf is medium green with sometimes a slight amount of wine beneath. Leaves are hairy, most heavily quilted, very fluted and cupped upward slightly. Mature leaves measure 2½ by over 3". The petiole on mature leaves grows to about 4" and is pale green. The petioles of young leaves have a touch of purple on them. Large flowers (1¾ to 2¼") are produced in clusters of 4-8, well above the foliage at about an average rate. Color B. V. 4.

Mrs. Boles is probably a sport of Marine or Ionantha. Its foliage is similar to the duPont varieties but much heavier and with a leaf that is more pointed.

Myrtle

The medium sized plant has a flat, compact, rather droopy method of growth. The young leaves are medium green with almost white backs and medium green veins. The mature leaves are usually richer, deeper green and sometimes very glossy. The ovate leaves have few hairs and are rather flat. Leaf size is about 2" by 3". Short petioles to 3" are medium green to almost white. Four to six rather small flowers (1⅛" in diameter) are produced freely just at the top of the foliage. Color B. V. 3.

Neptune

The large plant is flat and droopy. The young leaves are quite cupped or spooned where the leaf joins the petiole. Leaves are very dark green, flushed wine underneath. Mature leaves are ovate have few hairs, are glossy, very quilted and cupped. Leaves are large, 3 by 3¼" or larger on healthy plants. The 3-4" petioles are deep rose purple. The quite round flowers are 1½ to 2" in diameter, in clusters of 4 usually, produced very freely, close to the foliage. Color B. V. 2 or B. V. 3.

Norseman

The plant grows in a flat, tight rosette with older leaves tending to droop. The young leaves are glossier than old and are ovate. All leaves may or may not have a rosy tinge beneath. Mature leaves are medium green with the central portion directly cupped downward slightly at tip. Mature leaves measure 2¾ by 3". Petioles are flushed slightly wine-red and grow to 4" or longer. Flowers 1½" across are produced in clusters of 4-9, freely and well above the foliage. Color V. B. 4 or 5.

Orchid Beauty

The most confused of all varieties. Other varieties which are the same or so similar as to not be distinct are Orchid Queen, Rosy Blue, Trilby, Orchid Red, Plum Pink, Plum, Mary Wac, Vivid Plum, Vivid, Betty Joe and perhaps many others.

The medium sized plant is upright. The ovate leaves are smooth and cupped downward. Mature leaves measure 2½ by 2¾" or slightly larger. The petiole is flushed wine, especially on young leaves, and grows to about 3" in length. Flowers about 1⅜" in diameter, in clusters of 4-7, are produced very freely well above the foliage. Color of flowers: top petals R. V. 3, bottom R. V. 4,

Orchid Girl

Originated as a sport of Ulrey's Blue Girl. The large plant grows flat. The leaf is deep green with mature leaves thicker and more scalloped than young leaves. The cream blotch of color where the leaf joins the petiole that is present on Blue Girl is also a distinguishing character of this variety. Mature leaves are hairy, almost round and cupped downward, measuring 2¾" in diameter. The petiole is pale green with pronounced

Continued on Page 19

pink veins on top side and grows to about 4". Large flowers (1½ to 2") are produced very freely in clusters of 3-5, well above the foliage. Color V. 2.

Orchid Lady (See Amethyst)

Orchid Red (See Orchid Beauty)

Orchid Queen (See Orchid Beauty)

Ozark Skies (See Norseman)

Pansy Purple (See Mentor Boy) Not a distinct variety.

Pink Beauty
Patented. The first pink African violet. The large plant is upright and compact. The young leaf is dark green with flushed veins beneath. The mature leaf is somewhat lighter green without coloring in the veins. Young leaves are cordate at base with crenate margins. Old leaves are finely hairy, ovate with pointed tip and slightly cordate base but with almost smooth margin. Mature leaves measure 2¼ by 2⅞". Petiole is flushed wine-red in young leaves; little or no coloring in old leaves. Petioles grow to about 4" long. Flowers about 1⅝" in diameter are produced freely in clusters of 7-8, well above the foliage. Color is amaranth pink, between V. R. 6 and R. 6.
Pink Beauty Supreme (See Amazon Pink) Amazon Pink was named first and they are not distinct from one another.

Pink Girl

Originated as a sport of Blue Girl. Patented. Plant grows in a cushion-type rosette. Leaves are medium green, similar to Blue Girl, with creamy marking at the apex of petiole and irregularly marked scallops on edges of leaves. It has a more compact and stiffer foliage than Blue Girl, but has the similar heartshaped leaves except when the irregular scallops alter it occasionally. Veins of leaf are transparent and back of leaf is pale. The glossy leaves have few hairs. Petioles are short, flushed red-purple. Four to seven large (1½-2") flowers are produced per long flower stalk. Flower color between V. R. 6 and R. 6. Flowers are generally cupped and sometimes have fluted edges.

Plum (See Orchid Beauty)

Plum Pink (See Orchid Beauty)

Plum Vivid (See Orchid Beauty)

Redhead

The large plant is more upright than flat. The deep green foliage is cordate, slightly hairy, shiny and slightly quilted. The margins of leaves are finely serrate. Mature leaves measure 2⅜ by 3¼". The petiole is light green flushed with wine growing to about 3" in length. The medium sized (1⅜ by 1½") flowers are produced freely in clusters of 4-6, well above foliage. The color is R. V. 2 with the top petals slightly darker and darker spots just above the tube.

Rosy Blue (See Orchid Beauty)

Royal Sunset (See Viking)

Ruffles

Plant habit is more or less droopy. Foliage is hairy, narrow and pointed. The edge of leaves is toothed with a distinct fullness that gives a ruffled appearance. Underside of the leaves is quite rosy, deepening to almost a cabbage red in some areas. This variety has a characteristic of developing plantlets or offsets on the tip of a stem growing from the crown, pretty much as flowers are produced. These offsets may be used for propagation and will produce normal plants. Ruffles is distinct for its foliage. The blooms are quite small with an elongated lower petal. Frequently this variety sports a plant that bears flowers with additional petals. Flower color B. V. 5.

Sapphire

Originated as a seedling of Blue Boy X Ionantha. The large plant is bushy and upright. The foliage is small, ovate,hairy, dark green. Young leaves are slightly cordate and darker with evenly crenate margins. The margins of older leaves are almost smooth. Undersides of leaves may be dark flushed wine-red or under other conditions light green. The young leaves and petioles are more highly colored than old. Mature leaves measure 1 by 2¾". Petioles grow to about 5" on older leaves. Small flowers (1-1¼") are produced freely usually 4 in a cluster and down in foliage. Color in good light is B. V. 1.

Summer Skies

Lighter color and smaller leaves than Blue Boy. Originated as a seedling of Pink Beauty X Blue Boy. The medium sized plant is upright. Young leaves are medium green; older leaves are lighter with some netting in the small veins and the large veins are flushed slightly with wine. The moderately hairy leaves are ovate with cordate base and a tip that curves down-ward. Mature leaves measure 1⅞ by 2⅜". The short petiole (to 2¾") is flushed wine-red. Medium sized flowers (1½") are produced freely in clusters of 4 usually, well above the foliage. Color B. V. 5.

Supreme (See Viking)

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Tinted Lady

Resembles Ionantha to some extent. The plant is large, semi-upright, resembling Ionantha in this respect. The young leaves are medium green, slightly tinted with pale wine beneath. Older leaves are medium green but usually not colored beneath. Mature leaves are hairy, quilted, fluted and slightly cupped upward. The leaves are ovate, with rather sharply tapered tips and measure 2½ by 3¼". The petioles of mature leaves are pale green with a tint of wine at times; they reach a length of 5". The medium sized flowers (1¼-1½") are produced freely, in clusters of 5-8, just at the top of the foliage. Color is white overlaid with a tint of light grey blue. Paler than V. 6.

Topaz

Originated as a seedling of Ionantha X Blue Boy. The plant is large and grows in a loose flat rosette, if a single crown plant. Young leaves are deep green, cordate, distinctly crenate, with the undersides dark wine under some conditions and light green under others. The mature leaves are dark green but with little or no color beneath. Mature leaves are hairy, slightly quilted and ovate, measuring about 2½ by 3¼". The petiole is flushed purple-red, growing to about 4" on mature leaves. Flowers are small (1¼" or slightly wider), produced freely. Color B. V. 2 or V. 1.

Trilby (See Orchid Beauty)

Viking

The medium sized plant has a compact, flat habit of growth. Leaves are dark green with a light streak in center. The underside of the leaf is reddish purple. The light streak in center may become dark reddish from pigment underneath showing through. The outer edge of the leaf blade is lighter than central portion. Mature leaves are glossy, quilted and cupped upward slightly. They measure 1½ by 2½". Petioles are green flushed with purple. Flowers about 1" across, in clusters of 4-6, are freely produced just at the top of the foliage. Color V. 1.

Vivid Plum (See Orchid Beauty)

White Lady

The first white African violet. Patented. The plant is dwarf, compact and upright. Leaves are small, light green, with almost smooth margins. Mature leaves are ovate with transparent veins, the leaf measuring about 2¼ by 2¾". Petioles are short (about 2½") and light green with no purple coloring. Flowers to about 1½" across are produced freely on short flower stems just at the top of foliage. Color is glistening white.

#32

The medium large plant grows in a flat rosette. The medium green leaf is lightly tinged with red on the back. Leaf is very glossy, quilted, slightly troughed, deeply veined with an almost smooth edge. Mature leaves grow to about 2 by 2⅝". Petioles are to about 3" long. Clusters of four flowers 1⅜" in diameter, are produced freely and well above the foliage. Color V. 4.

Kewensis

The small plant is almost a miniature. It grows in a flat, tight rosette. The medium to light green leaves are quite thin with slightly serrate margins. They are very smooth, slightly quilted, and flat, growing to 1⅝ by 2" in size. The medium green petioles are thin and grow to 2" in length. Flowers are tiny, usually less than 1" in diameter, produced in clusters of 2 to 3, well above foliage. A good bloomer. Easily propagated. Shows a tendency to sucker freely. Color B. V. 2.

Redland

Resembles amethyst in every respect except in color of flower which is R. V. 1. Distinct and worthwhile for its color.

Sailor Boy

The medium sized plant is flat and tends to droop. Young leaves are cupped upward; old leaves are broadly heart shaped, medium green in color and growing to about 1¾ by 2". The medium green petiole grows to 3½" in length. Flowers are produced in clusters, freely above the foliage. Color between B. 6 and B. V. 6.

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VIRGINIA LEE GARDENS

Dept. A. Greensboro, Md,

Feasterville, Pennsylvania
November 30, 1948

Dear Fellow Members,

As there is much to write about, please pardon the lack of preliminaries - thus allowing me to immediately assume the role of your "reporter".

With 'Ol Man Winter' here, our Saintpaulias require extra attention, in order to be beautiful during the long and severe weeks ahead. One little courtesy which they appreciate is the addition of charcoal to their soil mixture. Those of us who have not already formed this habit, might begin now. And, as you are desirous of learning details, I'll invite Elizabeth Wurster (Unit 7) to relate her experience and give instructions. Quote:

"Somewhere, I once read that Charcoal is a soil sweetener - so after losing a choice violet from Crown Rot, I decided to experiment. Now, this item is available at seed-houses, but I had no time to waste in ordering; therefore - consulted my husband. "Sure, I know how to make Charcoal - used to feed it to the hogs years ago." So I adapted myself to being a scholar and attentively listened. "Make a bonfire, burning hardwood until it becomes a mass of glowing embers; then pour several pails of cold water over it." However, I had no appropriate place to build an open fire, so went about the task of preparing one in my kitchen range. I used several hardwood sticks (oak) and placing them on top of the bed of hot coal I let them remain until they too, became a glowing mass - tho' still holding their stick form. Then, I carefully removed them with my ash shovel and immediately plunged them into a half filled pail of cold water. In a short while, I drained off the water and when the charcoal became dry, I placed these charred sticks in an old flat bottom pan and crushed them into tiny pellets, about the size of peas, tho' some crushed much finer. I tried my first Charcoal a year ago, and proudly confide that since, I have not lost a single violet because of Crown Rot. I advocate one cupful of Charcoal to a gallon of soil mixture."

Recently, Mrs. H. H. Rathbun (Unit 8) has mentioned that Chlorine in city water is a detriment to her flowers. Unfortunately, we do not all have pure water free from chemicals - but I do suggest that people having to use city water, draw it from tap in evening, thus allowing sediments to settle over night, carefully pouring off the water in the morning before using.

Mrs. W. T. Mears (Unit 28) is now proudly displaying seedlings, that are tantalizingly coming into bloom that were sown in March 1948. Quote the lady: "I have planted seed in sand and peat; Spaghnum moss and equal parts of sand and leafmold; tho' the latter I have found more successful. I just sow them in a flower pot, cover with glass until germination; and transplant quite early (sometimes having to lift them on the end of a nut pick)". Mrs. Mears believes cross pollenizing and growing one's own seed pods to be the most thrilling!

I also wish to thank Mrs. Arthur Rehbein (Unit 19) for the timely constructive criticism which follows: "The African Violet magazine is wonderful. But how I do wish someone would make up a binder so that our copies could be filed away for future reference." This is food for thought - can the proposal be put into action?

Now friends, 'tis time I conclude my letter. However, may I remind you of these timely gift suggestions? A subscripion (or renewal of membership) to our National Society: contact: Mr. Boyce Edens: 2694 Lenox Rd. N.E.; Atlanta, Ga.; Saintpaulia stationery, obtainable at 31 Jefferson St., Haverhill, Mass.; Our National violet emblem pin: order from Florence Dolton: Somerton, Phila., Pa.; or

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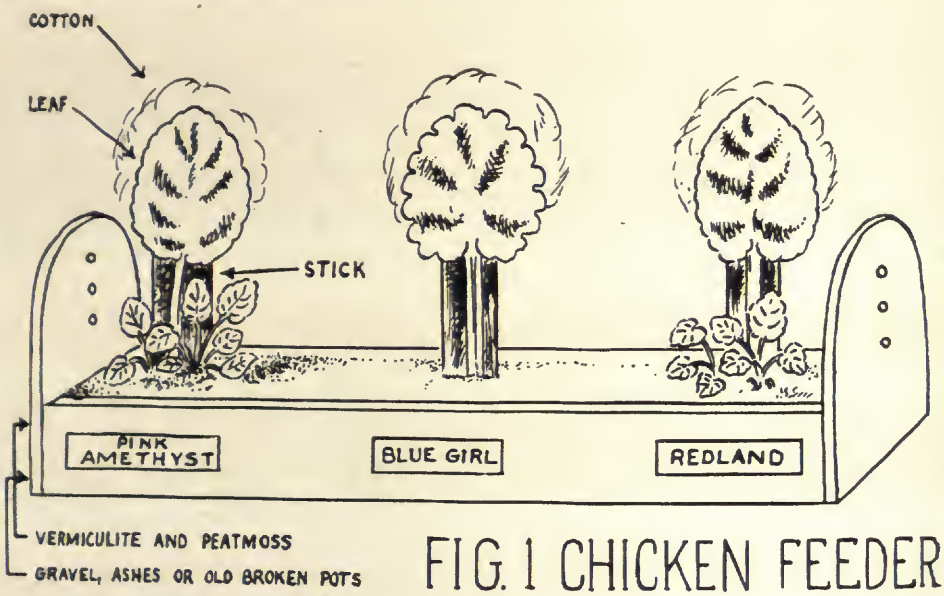

FIG. 1 CHICKEN FEEDER

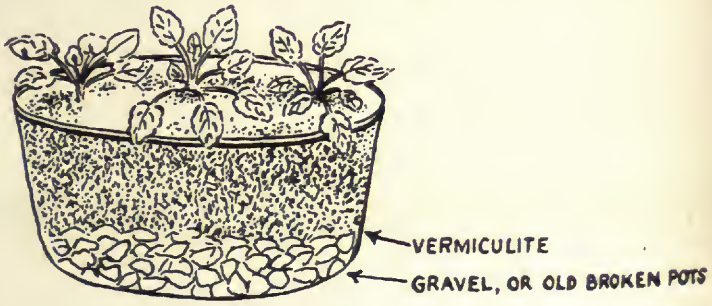

FIG. 2

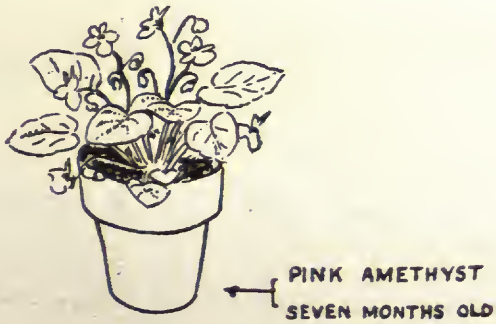

FIG. 3

Starting African Violet Leaves in Chicken Feeders

Grace Lynn

Last fall I purchased two chicken feeders at a hardware store. They were each 36 inches long, 5 inches wide and 2½ inches deep. The handles were removed and the feeders painted an ivory on the outside to match the woodwork in the room. They were quite attractive. I placed them on a card table near a window where I planned to grow my new plants. Chicken feeders may also be used on window brackets just as you use glass shelves. Painting them to match your woodwork or color scheme. They may be made most unusual and decorative with a little ingenuity and labor.

Several ingredients were used in preparing the feeders for the leaves. In the bottom, gravel, ashes, and pieces of broken pot were placed to provide good artificial drainage, this being most necessary. Next, one part of Vermiculite and one part of peat moss was mixed in a deep pan. Hot water was poured over this, and it was allowed to stand over night. The next day it was well soaked and ready to use. The water was then squeezed out a hand full at a time, and it was lightly packed in the chicken feeder on top of the drainage layer of broken pot to about ¼ inch of the top. This ¼ inch space was allowed for good surface watering without it over flowing, and for digging in if I needed to dig later and did not want to spill the peat and vermiculite on the floor or table.

The chicken feeder was now ready to plant leaves in. I cut the stems of the leaves I wish to plant with a sharp razor blade. Then set them in place, and behind them use small sticks each with a fluff of cotton. This little cotton pillow seems to take the strain of supporting its weight off of the leaf and aids them to grow more quickly. (Figure 1) Small in between sticks too should be carefully placed to hold the leaf firmly in place which in turn will give the tiny roots a good chance to grow without being crushed should the leaf wobble.

How interesting it is to watch the little leaves come up and grow so nicely and healthfully. Only two leaves have died since last fall.

Because the chicken feeder holds moisture it does not require watering as frequently. Leaves were watered each week with warm Hyponex water. (¼ teaspoon Hyponex to a quart of warm water).

When the little plants grew to be about 2 inches high I removed the larger clusters, and separated them very carefully with a sharp pointed pocket knife.

These small plants were then planted in a pot of well soaked Vermiculite (Figure 2) and watered each week with warm Hyponex water. They grew fine root systems and in a few weeks they were potted in sterilized soil. They grew off fast and bloomed quickly. (Figure 3).

The chicken feeder is very handy to use. It is so easy to carry, holds its moisture well and it leaves plenty of room on the table. I can plant about 14 to 16 leaves nicely in a 36 inch feeder.

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

TO ALL

OUR VIOLET FRIENDS

TINARI FLORAL GARDENS

Saintpaulia Growers and Specialists

BETHAYRES, PA.

Violets for Disabled Veterans

Harvey Cox

This is another day of idle hours for thousands of veterans who because of the nature of their disability can no longer find recreation in the ordinary fields. Our Government has made an honest effort to bring hand craft to hands that falter, and new interests to minds that fret, but the job is not easy in that a great variety of hobbies strong in their appeal must be offered.

My experience leads me to believe that our bright eyed gal "Miss Blue Girl" is in many cases exactly what the doctor ordered. Or, perhaps "Doc" will prescribe that timid little gal "Miss Blushing Maiden". Hold your ire, wives and sweethearts, these girls are a couple of our African Violet friends. Hands that can put down a leaf, mix soil and pot the plantlets are busy hands. A mind at work on a cross pollination that would give us a bright red blossom is a busy mind. The days that follow are anxious days filled with anticipation waiting the first flower on those seedlings. Busy minds and busy hands do not fret and falter. We who read these columns know all too well how our violets can wrap us around their little petioles and enslave us to their slightest need. When hale and hearty folks go slightly crazy over collecting and growing African Violets is there any wonder people limited in the things they can do take their violets to heart.

How can we bring African Violets to the disabled veterans who love flowers and their culture whether they are in or out of Government Hospitals. There are, to my knowledge, two methods of approach. One is that employed by the Memphis and Shelby County Society. They have sponsored the organization of a violet club in a local Government Hospital and the Browns of Newman, Georgia have contributed a large variety of blooming plants. Men confined to our Government Hospitals are old hands at banding together in an effort to make their days more enjoyable. A small amount of encouragement and instruction from outside will result in an active African Violet Club.

Another method must be used to reach those disabled veterans who have been released from hospitals. Veterans organizations such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Veterans and Disabled American Veterans have Chaplains who keep in touch with disabled members. Local violet societies or individuals, for that matter, will find these Chaplins ready and willing to extend any aid that will bring new interests to their disabled members.

Only the high spots of Violets for Disabled Veterans have been touched. A program worth its salt will as it progresses present many and varied problems. These problems will be worked out as we go along.

It is my sincere hope the movement started in Tennessee will spread to all States. The chore is ours, the cause is worthy.

HYPONEX Plant Food - clean, odorless, safe to use weekly for violets. 7 oz. 50c 1 lb. $1.00.
OPTOX Spray - safe effective to maintain a clean, healthy violet collection. 1 oz. 60¢ 7 oz. $1.25.
Certified Potting SOIL - 3 lb. $1.00 5 lb. $1.50 P.Pd.
BLUE EYES and DOUBLE RUSSION - our most popular introdutions 1.50 ea. P.Pd. make unusual Xmas gifts. Free list of African Violets and accessories on request.

TINARI FLORAL GARDENS
Saintpaulia Growers
and Specialists
DEPT. A BETHAYRES, PA.

Have You Tried This?

Louise Smouse

Why not try rooting leaves, planting and transplanting your Violets according to the signs of the Zodiac as many of our grandparents did in planting their gardens. They had fine gardens and they wouldn't plant their crops when the signs were not right. They believed in the signs in the almanac, and they worked by them. So it may be worth a trial by some of us today. A neighbor of mine who has been experimenting with her African Violets this way, and who has kept careful records believes in this too. Leaves that were taken off to root on the wrong date according to the almanac have rotted. Other leaves removed on the days marked as suitable have rooted quickly. Plants that were planted and transplanted have done the same when done on the days marked as suitable.

Will others who have had experience with planting by the signs of the Zodiac let us hear from them?

CINCINNATI — 1949!

Mark Friday, April 29 and Saturday, April 30, 1949 as big days for our National Society. Come to Cincinnati and join the happy throng of violet people. Meet your friends from all over the country. Last year there were sixteen states and the District of Columbia represented. Come and represent your state.

The convention is to be held at the Cincinnati Club and the program planned so far includes such Topics as "Treatment of Diseases and Insect Pests Prevalent Among African Violets", "Symposium on Origination of New and Improved Varieties of African Violets", "Easiest and Most Practical Way to Produce Specimen Full-blooming Plants of African Violets", (this subject is to be presented by several of our well known members.)

We are planning an exhibit of the new and better varieties and you are hereby invited to exhibit your new varieties. There will be two divisions or classes in this exhibit, one for the commercial growers and one for the amateur. So groom your plants and bring your better seedlings and new varieties.

Prof. Alex Laurie of Ohio State University will be the speaker at our dinner meeting. Mr. F. F. Rockwell says of Prof. Laurie "he is internationally famous as an authority on soil and its fertility, plant feeding and related subjects which have to do with the practical phases of plant growth. A great deal of work and research has been done on African violets at Ohio State and we are indeed proud and pleased to have Prof. Laurie's promise to speak to us.

Of course there will be the annual meeting of the organization with its interesting and vital reports. I'm sure you won't want to miss this.

This is the tentative program as it has been planned so far. After all it is Your convention, so if you have any ideas or suggestions please send them along.

SPRINGFIELD PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY

The following officers have been elected for the newly organized African Violet Society which has been formed in Springfield, Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

President — Mrs. R. J. Schadewald
Vice-Pres. — Mrs. J. Victor Turner
Secretary — Mrs. Phillys Filing
Treasurer — Mrs. Wallace K. Callum

The Memphis and Shelby County African Violet Society held their fall meeting September 1 in the National Bank of Commerce Lounge. A propagation table with full information was used. A leaf exchange is to be a feature of each meeting.

The Society is now propagating 50 more plants for patients at the Kennedy Veterans Hospital which has a club of 30 members. The Society also plans to purchase self-watering containers for plants of interested bed-ridden patients.

They also sponsor a society at the Lamor Veterans Hospital for T. B. Veterans. Twice a month they give instructions on the care of plants as well as sharing plants, leaves, soil and pots with the 33 members.

To a Home for Convalescents the club has presented 125 plants to the shut in patients who are not able to attend the meetings. They have also given honorary memberships to this group, and furnish a copy of the Violet Magazine for them to enjoy.

Mrs. W. C. Hope, president of the club, whose membership totals 150, announced the following new officers and committees; Mrs. Gerald Deering, parliamentarian; Mrs. H. B. May, chaplain; Miss Elsa Meister, historian; Mrs. G. C. Martin, program; Mrs. E. L. White, hospital; Mrs. John E. Hooper, shows and exhibits, Mrs. James T. Duthie, Membership.

The members of the Los Angeles Chapter of the African Violet Society elected the following permanent officers at the August 20th meeting. President, Mrs. Wanda Jones; president elect, Mrs. Carolyn Rector; second vice-president, Mrs. Mae Erhardt; secretary, Mrs. Sophia F. Schultz; treasurer, Miss Nelle Morris.

This group has grown to 40 members in the 5 months since it was organized. At the Southern California Show in Long Beach during August, the club had a 10 x 10 foot exhibit booth, attracting 15,000 visitors.

The Metropolitan African Violet Club which comprises the District of Columbia and the near ends of Virginia and Maryland elected the following officers for 1948.

Mrs. Warren E. J. Gottshall, President.
Mrs. Martha Husted, Vice-President.
Mrs. E. H. Toms, Sect. and Treas,

A spring show is being planned by the 15 members of this group with Mr. Warren Gottshall as General Show Chairman and Mrs. Husted as Publicity Chairman.

AFRICAN VIOLET SHOW

The Barton Heights Garden Club of Richmond, Va., sponsored an African Violet Show at Battery Park Community House on October 2. There were 45 different varieties included in the 239 plants entered. A steady stream of visitors viewed the show which was staged on tables arranged step-like around the entire wall of the Club House and roped off to insure safety of the plants. More than 600 people representing every major city in Virginia and eight States (Maryland, West Virginia, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Missouri, North Carolina and District of Columbia) visited the Club House during the hours of 2:00 to 9:00 P.M. when the show was open to the public.

Mrs. G. C. Phillips, Chairman of the show, and Mrs. George Hoss, Co-chairman and president of the Barton Heights Garden Club answered many questions for interested visitors as did the judges who were Mr. and Mrs. Warren E. J. Gottshall of Alexandria, Va. Mrs. L. R. Curry awarded prizes with the sweepstake prize going to Mrs. John T. Pangola. Mrs. R. S. Fogg won the prize for the best plant in the show with an Ionantha. Second best plant was Orchid Beauty owned by Mrs. John T. Pangola and third best was a Blue Girl owned by Mrs. John V. Morgan. Class winners were as follows:

Class 1 - Blue and purple - Mrs. Worth H. Carter

Class 2 - Lavender and lilac - Mrs. John T. Pangola

Class 3 - Red - Violet - Mrs. John T. Pangola

Class 4 - Pink - Mrs. W. A. Haynes

Class 5 - White - Mrs. V. R. Golderos

Class 6 - Doubles - Mrs. Mary Glass

Class 7 - Multiple crowns - Mrs. Hazel Flint

Continued From Page 21

give a lovely leather-bound "Guest Book", which may be purchased at most stationery stores for fond remembrances?

And . . . for the New Year, may we resolve to unite friendly spirits in our common interest, the African Violet, and appreciate God's many blessings! To all - A BEAUTIFUL and HAPPY SAVIOUR S BIRTHDAY!

Ever yours,
Elsie C. Freed
(Conductress)

LOS ANGELES CHAPTER EXHIBITS AT FOUR DAY SHOW

The Los Angeles Chapter of the African Violet Society of America not only surprised Southern California with the first real showing of African Violets (Saintpaulias) but everyone agreed that the interest in the Club Booth as well as the fifty foot table with competitive plants far exceeded any other exhibit. Some 15,000 people viewed this show and many returned again and again to look at the African Violets and to discuss them with the very capable members of the society who were a ways there to answer questions and tell of our wonderful society.

The Club Booth 10' x 10' was designed as the interior of a room with a large window at the end of the room and arranged in front of this window was an arrangement of thirty five varieties of African Violets. Much interest was manifest in a grouping of educational specimens of starting plants from leaf to blooming plants. The question that seemed to be advanced extensively was "Why do my plants not bloom?"

In the competitive division club members ran away with all supremacy awards except one. In the Novice division Mr. Harvey Cox of Long Beach took the Supremacy Trophy on his Saintpaulia "Sapphire", which was without doubt a wonderful specimen. He also took 2nd Supremacy Trophy in that division on an outstanding plant of Amazon Pink, being so new this plant attracted a great deal of interest. Mrs. Dollarhide took the Third Supremacy Trophy on her outstanding specimen of Pink Beauty. In the Amateur division, Mrs. Genevieve Marsh of San Pedro took the Supremacy award with her Du Pont Lavender Pink Saintpaulia, and Mrs. L. D. Thalheimer won the Third Supremacy on her Multiple Crown plant of Lilac Lady.

Homing Pigeon Correction

Ethel Crotty and Arthur Chard (both members of Unit 4) have made worthy contributions in the form of suggesting saucers. Ethel uses plastic dishes that can be purchased in the 5 and 10¢ stores in assorted colors (price 5¢ each); while Arthur has been using for some time, Clay Pigeons. These are obtainable at sport stores in a quantity of 135 for only $2.00. They are made of a combination of clay and pitch, coated black and are attractive. Of course they are fragile, but if treated with care are satisfactory for small potted plants. Both of these light weight containers are adapted for glass shelves.

Your Hint Hunter

Phyllis Ferrall

With most of the hints I present as your hint hunter I will try if possible to prove whether they work for the average person. It is many times easier for commercial growers to do things with all their conveniences than it is for a homemaker who has to work for proper humidity and fight for space.

Trying to keep our plants beautiful for our family and friends to enjoy is most important! Keep your pots attractive so that others will admire their beauty. As a compliment to your plants copper pots do wonders to bring out the beauty of your blooms. A picture window with climbing vines makes a charming setting for your pots of Violets or frame your window with colored drapes or a dotted swiss ruffle used around the window frame, and held in place with thumb tacks of corresponding color. Use a little imagination and originality in decorating your windows so your husband will show your plants to his friends with real pride! It will be worth every effort you put forth —

"YOUR HINT HUNTER"

If you have trouble with your leaves rotting when starting them in water try a few grains of wheat in the glass of water. The sugar in the wheat helps to prevent rotting.

"YOUR HINT HUNTER"

Do you have a plant that refuses to bloom no matter what you do to or for it? Put it in the electric refrigerator and leave exactly 4 minutes . . . no longer . . , and I am sure it will soon bloom. All it needs is a good shock! I have tried this and it works.

"YOUR HINT HUNTER"

In a preceding magazine Rosa Peters told us of her method of starting leaves in deep lake sand. We went to Lake Michigan and brought some back with us. Of course I tried it! It actually starts leaves quicker than any method I have found to date. I had some nice little mouse ears in 28 days. So get out your magazine and read Rosa Peters' article again.

"YOUR HINT HUNTER"

Mums and Pelargoniums are often hosts to mealy bugs . . . N N O R is really wonderful for killing these pests. I had them on six of my largest plants. After isolating them I cleaned off the mealy bugs with alcohol swabs, and later sprayed them with N N O R following the directions given on the bottle. The quarantined plants soon looked better than the plants in the house that didn't have mealy bugs . . . so I immediately proceeded to spray all of my plants!

"YOUR HINT HUNTER"

Do you have hot water on tap all the time, and a dish sprayer on your sink? Take your poor dusty plants and spray them thoroughly with luke warm water. Do this at night, and they will be entirely dry by morning. You will be overjoyed by the appearance of your lovely clean plants . . . and they will love it.

"YOUR HINT HUNTER"

Editors Note — Why not send your hints to Phyllis Ferrall, Route 5, Box 551, Battle Creek, Michigan. She will try them out and write them up.

"YOUR HINT HUNTER"

Before she sets her plants Charlotte Hughes fills the pots she wants to use with soil and bone meal, then pours boiling water over them, and covers them up with a piece of carpet. "They stay hot for several hours!" Mrs. Hughes says. In this way the boiling water not only kills any worms present but sterilizes the soil and releases nitrogen to give the plants a boost to start off on.

"YOUR HINT HUNTER"

"Having tried all sizes of pots I have decided that I like the smaller size best. I believe plants bloom more quickly and seem to have more bloom when grown first in smaller pots. Even mature plants do better for me if they are kept in smaller pots.

YOUR HINT HUNTER

Mildew — a white mold like growth on top of the soil may be controlled by spraying the top of the soil lightly with fine sulphur dust.

AFRICAN VIOLETS,
BEGONIAS, TROPICAL
SHADE PLANTS

N.N.O.R. Insecticide 6 oz. $1.00 16 oz. $2.15 Hyponex 7 oz. 50¢ 1 lb. $1.00.

We ship anywhere April to November.

Visitors welcome, write for free list out after February 1.

YOARS HOUSEPLANT
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Bunker Hill, Indiana

A Christmas Message

By Frank Tinari

At this most Blessed Season of the year, when our hearts are humble and our thought for others prevails, it is well to meditate about our mutual interest and share our thoughts with you.

All of us who have walked along the Saintpaulia paths in the past can be most grateful for the plant which has given us great personal joy. We have watched its growth from its early day of introduction and have seen it rise today to great popularity. It has brought contented bliss, charm and beauty in homes everywhere. A plant most cherished especially by the window gardener, whose love for the soil and the joy that plant life brings is often limited to the small apartment window. To the one who is destined to waiting, more swiftly the time flies with an interesting collection of Saintpaulias to hurry along those moments of anxiety.

One experience remains with us above all others . . . that of one of our dear friends whose beautiful violets had been for years her greatest pride. Darkness overcame her and she was not to see again. So vividly has the memory of her Violets remained with her, that when now we visit her the first gesture is to lead us by the hand to the most favored spot, the violet window garden. "Aren't they blooming beautifully?" she will ask. We understand in silence how much they mean to her. An inward prayer of thanks that now the past memory of her violets give her joy is our greatest consolation.

Another friend who has devoted her life to hospital work came to us one day greatly troubled. She was in search of something besides medicine to give her patients. Together we packed a box of violet leaves for her to take away. She now reports, "The Violet bug has come to stay with our patients, their conversation is full of violet lore, and what a pleasant subject!"

"Have you ever watched a bud open?" someone asked one day. "Its like the smile of a sleeping child." On the faces of many people we have seen an expression of joyful excitement and pleasure when they walk into our violet houses, especially so in the early winter months, when a mass of bloom shouts a welcome to them.

However as much as we have enjoyed the Saintpaulia in the past its future is perhaps even more fascinating. Its marvelous range of color and leaf pattern, its ability to throw mutants, and the ever increasing knowledge of pollination and successful propagation by both the amateur and commercial grower holds a real interest and a challenge for all of us.

With the National Society in action, the forming of clubs in all sections of our country and the window gardeners growing interest, the plant we cherish marches forward.

May we wish to one and all a most blessed Merry Christmas!

With Every Good Wish for Christmas

And the Coming Year

Alma Wright -- Mary Parker

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The African Violet Magazine

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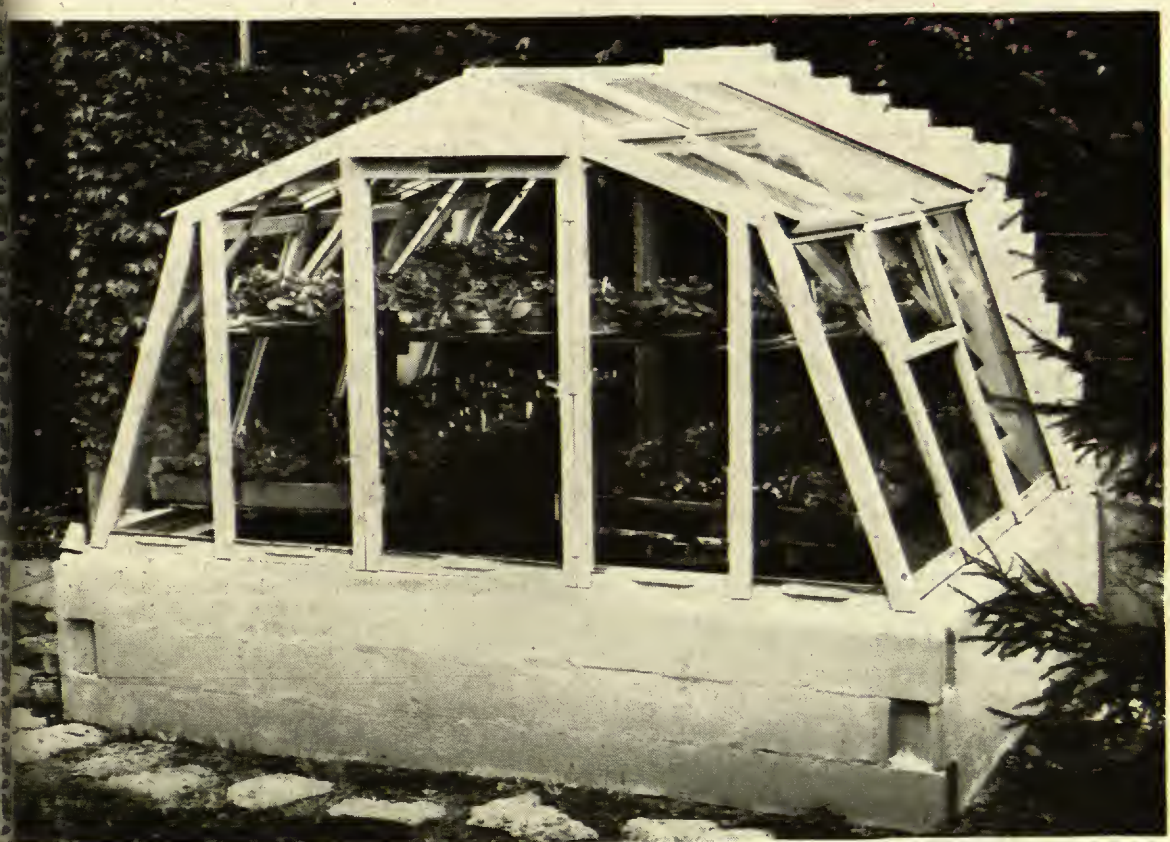

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Cover Design: Myrtle Radtke's attractive greenhouse.

The Editor Says:

Dear Members: The African Violet magazine is not a scientific publication. Most of the articles appearing on its pages are based on ideas and experiences of the members who contribute them. The pages are open to all.

This issue contains two more good articles on foliage disorders. Pauline Wyland's thought stirring article in the December issue began what we hope will be a series of articles on this subject, thus in time, increasing our knowledge to the extent that . . . the often hasty and many times inaccurate diagnosis of every ailing saintpaulia will be slowed down, and cease to be only . . . "MITES". More careful consideration will be given as to the exact nature of the cause if possible, before treatment is started . . . or ended. So both for comparison and contrast, Harriet Lawton's photographs and article on over-watering of her plants is being published at the same time as the article and photographs on mites and the use of Sodium Selenate by Mrs. Neil C. Miller.

The June issue will be mailed June 1 to 10. It will contain as much convention information as space will allow. And a report of as many of the speeches as we can obtain. Pictures will be more plentiful.

. . . Several interesting articles are on the menu.

Your club reporter, Maxine Wangberg, 1929 West 3rd Street, Perry, Iowa, will be p eased to hear of your local society activities. Please send her your information well enough in advance so that she will have ample time to send it on to the editor for the next issue of the magazine. Remember . . old reports do not have as much news value as something taking place nearer the time the magazine is published. Let us keep club news as much up to date as possible.

The members of the staff are working hard to improve the quality of the magazine with each issue. Your cooperation is solicited, your contributions are needed. Won't you share your experience with the other members of the society by writing an informative article on some phase of violet culture or describe some attractive way you are growing them?

Don't miss the Convention April 29 and 30.

See you in Cincinnati!

Sincerely,

Alma Wright

Advertising rates are $3.00 per column inch.

The President's Message

A Plan Of Registration

"What's in a name?" — is a trite expression. But it is really a worth-while one for us because it poses an important question regarding the genus Saintpaulia, to which African Violet Society of America is committed to find a helpful answer. To be specific, the Society has promised to set up and operate a Plan of Registration, through which an accurate record can be kept of the names and related identifying description of the various species and varieties or African Violets now extant — both hybrids and mutants — and the many varieties to be originated in the future.

It should be stated at the very outset that, in the main, the registration of both present and future varieties will, of course, be made by their respective originators. In other words, the Society will set up and operate the machinery of registration, but registration itself will be made by the originators or their authorized representatives. This is their privilege and prerogative the Society must not usurp.

A Plan of Registration of this kind is a great undertaking, and like all similar undertakings, will not only require sufficient time to set up and get into action, but the very heartiest collaboration of the entire Membership of the Society in its operation. I say this because I am confident that the encouragement, backing, and combined sales effort of the Membership is essential to the continued operation Of the Plan after it is set up.

The Plan of Registration your Executive Board and Board Directors approves will be carefully considered by both these governing groups of your Society when they meet during the Third Annual Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, April 29-30, 1949. A comprehensive outline of the Plan approved will be subsequently published in Volume 2 Number 4 of African Violet Magazine that will be mailed to the Membership soon after June 10, 1949. It is my earnest hope that every member will read this outline carefully.

African Violet Society will operate the Plan of Registration as a part of its permanent program of services, through a standing committee to be known as the Committee On Registration. Mr. Boyce M. Edens, of Atlanta, Georgia, who heretofore has served the Society as Treasurer, has consented to be the Chairman of this Committee when it is set up. He will bring to the task of this Committee a fine experience in growing and observing many of the species and varieties of African Violets for the past several years, as well as a comparable experience in growing and observing hundreds of varieties of Tall Bearded Iris. It is fitting to mention, in this connection, that Mr. W. E. J. Gottshall of Alexandria, Virginia, has generously consented to serve as Treasurer of the Society at the resignation of Mr. Edens March 1, 1949. Both Mr. Gottshall, and his charming wife Regina are valued members of the Society and are equally interested in growing and hybridizing African Violets.

I have saved for the conclusion of this message my expression of the hope that the operation of the Plan of Registration by the Society will do much towards eliminating the confusion caused by the duplication of variety names and also help eliminate the duplication of varieties known under different names. Certainly this is the high purpose of the Society in setting up this service. It is our aim that this service will become invaluable to the entire Membership of the Society, to every other amateur and commercial grower of African Violets, and to every past and future originator of improved varieties of our favorite house plant.

Cordially,

Your President,

Alma Wright

Come To Cincinnati!

COME TO CINCINNATI!

If you plan to attend the third annual Convention at Cincinnati, Ohio, April 29 and 30, you've a treat lined-up which should assure everyone an outstanding meeting. The Convention headquarters is the beautiful and hospitable Cincinnati Club, Race at Eighth Street.

THE CONVENTION PROGRAM

Friday, April 29, 1949

9:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon

Registration of Members at Cincinnati Club. Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Chairman, Local Committee on Arrangements, in Charge.

12:30 P.M. to 2:30 P.M.

Luncheon Meeting.

Welcome by Mr. Boyce M. Edens -- Atlanta, Ga. Symposium on Origination of New and Improved Varieties of African Violets.

a. Through Processes of Hybridization and seeding — speaker Mr. William Merkel, Mentor, Ohio.

b. Through Processes of Mutation and subsequent selection — speaker Mr. R. A. Brown, Jr., Newnan, Ga.

Mr. Henry Peterson, Cincinnati, Ohio, presiding.

3:00 P.M.

Exhibit of Newer Varieties of African Violets.

Presentation by the growers. For members only. In suite adjoining Ballroom.

6:30 P.M.

Dinner Meeting of Members and Guests. Speaker - Dr. Alex Laurie, Head of Floriculture Department of Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Mrs. Robert O. Wright, President, Knoxville, Tennessee, presiding.

Showing of newly released, colored movie of points of interest in Cincinnati.

Saturday, April 30, 1949

8:00 A.M. to 9:30 A.M.

Breakfast Meeting.

Easiest and Most Practical Way to Produce Full-Blooming Specimen Plants of African Violets.

Speakers:

Mrs. Raymond Crotty, Huntington, W. Va.

Mr. H. G. Harvey, Dunwoody, Ga.
Mrs. Z. C. Layson, Maysville, Ky.

Mrs. Clarissa Harris, Los Angeles, Calif., presiding.

10:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.

Morning left open to special Committee Meetings and to visits to private collections of African Violets and points of interest in Cincinnati.

1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Luncheon Meeting.

Annual Business Meeting of the Membership of the Society. Reports from Officers and Committees of the Society and election of Officers for the ensuing year.

Mrs. Robert O. Wright, President, Knoxville, Tenn., presiding.

MY HOBBY

By Nellie V. Naugel

Living alone in an apartment, I have always had lots of flowers. Since there are triple East windows and double West ones with wide sills, it is an ideal place for my hobby - - African Violets.

There are now seventeen varieties in my collection, half of them in pottery containers with no drainage. I have never read anything about this method of potting, but find that it gives fine results when the plants are watered lightly each morning with warm water and vitamins are added once a month.

In Summer windows are open. In East window a large tree provides late morning shade. Lowered blinds in West windows provide shade there, (with windows left partly open).

I keep ivies in water near the violets for added moisture, and in winter the room temperature is 70°.

After starting leaves in water, I pot them in vermiculite, later in mixture of vermiculite, peat and sand. When plants are an inch or more high, they are transferred to small containers, using sand, peat and black soil. Living in a small town, I have trouble getting inexpensive pots of the right size.

The varieties in my collection are:

Blue Boy, Blue Girl, Pink Beauty, Pink Girl, Pink Lady, Supreme, Dupont Purple, Dupont Pink, Redhead, Duchess, White Lady, Mary Wac, Neptune, Ionantha, Gorgeous, Trilby and Mentor Boy.

As my space is limited, about three outstanding new varieties should be enough to complete my collection.

I do love my violets. They are my first thought each morning, and they keep me from being lonely.

Being an amateur, the African Violet Magazine is most helpful and has brought much enjoyment.

One of the pleasures of African violet growing as a hobby is exchanging small plants with friends.

A Greenhouse For My Violets

Maxine Wangberg

Upon leaving Cincinnati at the conclusion of the 1948 African Violet Convention, we were privileged to visit several private and commercial greenhouses. It was when we were back on the road home after a very pleasant morning at the Yoars Nursery in Bunkerhill, Ind. that my husband turned to me and asked the very startling and rather foolish question, "How would you like to have a greenhouse?" I had noticed that he was deep in conversation with Mr. Yoars, and found it was about how their new house was constructed, so we benefited greatly by their experience and suggestions.

Oral plans made in the car became plans and estimates on paper when we arrived home. My father, who is a retired businessman with a hobby of building, started with the construction almost at once.

All the windows, with the exception of a unit of three with movable sash, are permanently constructed of 20 x 40 inch glass used double with an air space between. These are weatherstripped on each inside edge, and caulked on the outside. The unit of three windows is equipped with screens for ventilation in summer and storm windows for protection in our Iowa winters.

Although it is only 8 x 12 feet in size, my bench room is almost doubled by the 10 x 20 inch double permanent glass panels set half way between the height of the bench and the floor. My floor is cement from wall to wall, and underneath the bench sit my leaf propagating jars. Later, as my benches become completely filled, we will erect a second bench under the present one.

My bench is built in a U shape, 30" inches wide and a total running length of 24 feet. Galvanized tin trays were made to fit the bench and these were filled with sand. On the advice of our local florist, we are filling one with roofing gravel, using it 2 inches deep over a one inch layer of spaghnum moss. We were not experienced enough to provide a drain tube for our trays and great care has to be taken with the sand as there is danger of overwatering.

The inside is painted white and for a bit of glamour the ceiling is of new wood block with a fluorescent light with day light tubes.

The roof is shingled and the spaces between the glass on the sides are sided, Light green paint was stippled onto the outside of the glass, enabling us to be away for several days at a time without danger of the leaves burning. A door made of car siding and varnished clear, complete with a screen door, and a small oil heater for winter completes my hobby nook which was almost a necessity for my growing number of violets.

Variegateds

Illustrated by Ross Hahn

Variegated White Lady

Variegated Blue Girl

Variegateds

Phyllis Ferrall

I went on an "Information Please" hunt for opinions concerning variegation in African Violets. I was not too successful, but I did gather the following ideas.

Elsie Freed, when asked what she thought about variegated plants said, "I believe Variegateds are sports and that they cannot be depended upon to reproduce variegated plants".

"Mine is a matter of opinion only", said Mary Parker. "I don't really know why some plants produce variegated foliage. I have a plant with partly variegated foliage from which I have removed eight leaves, and seven of these leaves have produced variegated plantlets thus far. Alma Wright has often said to me that she believes variegation may possibly be a deficiency within the plant itself and that when this supposed deficiency is corrected, the plant will turn a normal green color again. I am not, however, in agreement with this idea and I believe that variegated plants are sports".

Carolyn Rector of California says. "I believe variegation is a recessive factor, and at present not fixed. Leaves from variegated plants may be all green. Take leaves of these green plants and root them. A small percentage of the resulting plants may be variegated. One grower says probably 10%. another says from 3% to 10%. These variegated leaves root more slowly and apparently do not produce many plants each".

Not too long ago I received a variegated Blue Girl leaf from Mabel Wilks. This leaf is producing a variegated plant. There are seven leaves on this plant at present and I am wondering how long it will remain variegated. I would welcome expressions of opinions by others. "Wiseth is the man who profits by the experience of others".

It appears to be the belief of many that albino plants die before they get to the blooming stage. I have an Orchid Beauty that has an albino plant growing in the pot beside the normal green plant. They are joined together at the root, and although they are both small plants, the crown with plain green foliage blooms beautifully, and it appears to be exceedingly healthy. Of course, if I divided the albino section away from the green crown, the albino plant would no doubt die. Also, I don't believe the albino section will ever bloom. Here again I welcome information from other sources.

I hope that I have written something that will be encouraging to those who would like to grow a variegated plant.

Won't you let me know if you have grown variegated plants and what your experience has been?

Variegated leaves root more slowly for me than green leaves. Don't get discouraged . . . try again. A lovely variegated plant is worth all the trouble it may seem.

Over 50 Distinct Varieties of

African Violets

See Our Magnificent Specimen Plants—Glorious Blossoms

View our latest introductions:

"BEHNKE BOY" AND "FANTASY"

We do not ship, nevertheless we like to have you stop in on your visit to the Nation's Capital. If possible take a few Saint Paulias home with you as so many of our out-of-town visitors are doing.

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A

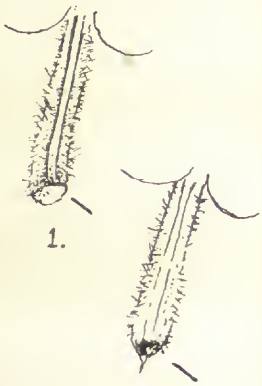
B

C

Shard

D

E



F

Prescriptions for Saintpaulias

(Illustrations by Arthur G. Chard)

(Q) If an African violet leaf is received in a wilted condition, and the petiole is healed over, how may the leaf be revived to its original state? (Illustration A) Should the end of the petiole be cut to facilitate better water absorption, or isn't this necessary? Would the wilted leaf absorb any water if the petiole was not recut? Is there any "life-giving" element added to the water to rejuvenate the leaf? How long should the petiole be if one plans to root it in a rooting medium other than water?

(A) By submersion of the entire petiole in cool water for a few days. It also helps to place the leaf blade in as horizontal position as possible. The end need not be recut if it has "healed" straight across; however, if the end has collapsed, as the illustration would indicate, it will be necessary to recut it and "healing" for another two or three hours will not aggravate the wilted condition of the leaf to any great extent. Vitamin B1 may be added to the water or even a hydroponic. It is something of an "accepted fact" that the shorter the petiole the sooner plantlets will appear. A petiole up to about an inch and a half is perhaps best. Old, nearly spent leaves are apt to go limp and usually cannot be saved. Young ones seldom do unless kept too long before placing in water or a rooting medium.

(Q) Is there any way an African Violet leaf can be saved when it has rotted in the middle as pictured? (Illustration B) What is the preventative for this rot? Would too high a humidity be the cause of this? Is it possible to root a petiole without a leaf?

(A) No. It would not be worth the effort to save a leaf so badly rotted. However, if the top half of the leaf is still good it can be cut off from the rotted part, healed, and planted - being sure not to keep it too wet at any time. Too high a humidity can cause it, also, if it was a leaf received thru the mails, it may be that the leaf blade was not kept dry in transit. There is not enough stored-up energy and vitality in a petiole without a leaf. As a preventative keep a leaf blade dry at all times, especially when exposed to light. If the rot is at the edge and not too large in extent the leaf should be removed from the water, or the rooting medium, allowed to become dry, then the bad portion should be cut off and the scar allowed to heal before being returned to the water, or water added to the rooting medium. Sometimes painting the rotted portion with dry Fermate will cause the rot to dry and stop its spreading.

(Q) When a leaf is damaged or partially cut or broken off, will it slow up rooting? Is the life of the leaf shortened by the fact that it is damaged? (Illustration C)

(A) No. Provided the cut or break has been allowed to heal completely. The "life" may be shortened but it will still produce plants. Plants may also be produced at the edges of the cut or break in some instances but they are rather hard to remove and root due to the fact that they cannot be raised to a size large enough to permit them to store up enough vitality to last thru the rooting process.

(Q) What causes a petiole to rot? (Illustration D) Can one reroot the short petiole after the rotted part is cut off? Has the leaf lost any of its vigor as a result of the rotted petiole? What is the preventative of petioles rotting?

(A) Perhaps a variety of reasons - too strong a light may shine thru the water and burn the end; or if potted, the soil or rooting medium may be kept too moist until the end had healed; or, too much fertilizer may have been added which caused burning. The rot can be removed, the end allowed to dry and heal and then reset. It is not known whether the vitality of the leaf is affected but it probably is if the rot has developed quite some time after the leaf was removed and set for rooting. There is probably no strict preventative of petioles rotting. They may be dipped into "Fermate" or "Rootone" when cut - this may help but it is not an absolute preventative.

(Q) When a leaf has rooted in water. should it be allowed to form a small plant before it is planted into a rooting medium, (Illustration E) and if so, how big should the plant be? How deep in the soil medium should the small plant be inserted?

(A) It is not necessary for a leaf rooting in water to form a plantlet before potting - possibly it is better for it not to. If a small plant is allowed to form it may be planted either just below the surface in its entirety or just above the soil. If the latter, it should be kept out of light until the exposed petiole and plantlet is completely dry or it may burn or rot. Naturally a plantlet of any size (one with definite petioles already formed) must be planted above (or on) the soil. The leaf blade should be supported so that its weight does not pull the roots from the soil mixture.

(Q) Some advise letting a petiole scar before planting. (Illustration F) Is this absolutely necessary, is there any benefit derived from this act? Does letting the petiole scar over tend to aggravate the condition as in Illustration A?

(A) It may not be absolutely necessary. as many leaves are rooted without the cut being healed. but it is something of a preventative for rot. A "collapsed" end should not be confused with a "healed" end. The former will taper off to a hair. as in sketch 2. While a "scared" or healed end will remain straight and firm as in sketch 1. Healing will not cause or aggravate a limp condition if the leaf is a healthy one and not an old nearly spent leaf from the outside, or base of the crown.

Collecting Then and Now

Martha Mears

I do not remember just how I came into possession of my first African Violet, but I do know that it started me on a hobby of which I have never grown tired over a period of years. Being an ardent gardener and a lover of all flowers, I was entranced with its lovely but periodic blue flowers. Like most every one at that time, I knew little of their culture, and to my dismay, when trying to find some literature on the growing of them, I found that there was very little written material to be found.

A friend taught me how to start new ones from leaf cuttings and it was then thought necessary to bind three leaves and stems together, facing each other, forming a sort of rosette and insert all the stems in soil. I had very little success with this, not knowing at the time that the secret of success was keeping them warm and moist.

At first I was very happy and proud of my blue one. I did not even know its name but it must have been Blue Boy. Then I began to hear rumors. Did I know that there were other colors? Light blue, pink, brown, yellow - and I was off on one of the most exciting and often disappointing hunts of my life. Hunts? Disappointments? Oh yes; for I, too, wasted much postage and effort and time trying to find that elusive yellow. East, West, North and South my letters of enquiry went; impatiently I watched the mail for a return letter, only to hear each time that it was in some other town where it had been seen. Even now the rumor is still passing around and, altho I am skeptical, I always hope that someday there will be one.

Gradually I began to add to my collection, Sailor Boy, Neptune, Mermaid, Commodore. I purchased several in a small town close by, including my first Ionantha. It grew into a large plant measuring fifteen inches across and my pride in it knew no bounds. By trial and error I found some of their likes and dislikes. It was then thought ruinous to let water touch the foliage so I carefully brushed each leaf with one of the very soft baby brushes which was useless to keep a baby's hair in order but very useful to remove dust from a delicate violet leaf. I learned better methods of propagation, grew more plants, and they thrived.

When I saw a colored picture of Blue Girl in a trade journal I thought that I could never wait to own one. Not being able to find one retail, we ordered some wholesale and let friends have part of them. They were just as lovely as advertised, which was a surprise.

When Pink Beauty was announced, it was the same desire all over again. I had lavendar pink but this announcement said clear pink. My husband was traveling at the time and he grew quite weary of visiting different flower shops in all the towns wherever he went asking for a pink African Violet. He received many different answers. "There is no such color". "We will have them later", while some of the clerks just thought he was plain crazy. Still, no pink violet. At last I saw Pink Beauty advertised for sale in a Northern state and altho I knew better, I ordered one in the middle of winter. When I brought it home from the express office my hands trembled as I hurriedly unwrapped it. Oh the disappointment; for it was all frozen. I ordered another one and the same fate met it. When Spring came we ordered wholesale again. I unpacked the box and stood all twenty-five of those plants with their lovely clear pink flowers in a row and marveled at their beauty. Twenty-five; and I had tried so hard to get just one.

In March 1943 Flower Grower, I answered a question in Queries and Answers regarding the source of African Violets, proudly stating that I had eleven varieties. Oh; what a mistake! The letters poured in! Would I sell? Would I swap? Did I know where you could get a yellow one? Wishing to share my treasures and knowing how hard they were to find I swapped leaves for iris, begonias, house plants or what have you.

During the war years I made a trip down to our state university and visited the greenhouse. There I purchased a six inch undivided plant of Viking. Travel was by bus then and with the large pot in one arm, an overnight bag, a purse and an umbrella in the other one, I elbowed my way through the crowd, shielding my violet from crushing, found a very much sought after seat and brought my new treasure safely home. I still have a part of the original plant.

Illness for a time put a stop to my collecting, altho I kept all the plants that I had. When I started collecting again what a bewildering surprise met me! New colors, new names in long, long lists. Advertisements by the dozen, of as many different varieties, soil, even a book on their culture. How fortunate we are today!

In the early spring of this year I received a list of commercial growers and saw Yoar's name at Bunkerhill, Ind. Since this was not far from my home, I decided to visit them and wrote to Mrs. Yoars telling her when to expect me. In great excitement I hurried out of bed on the day of my trip, went to the window to check the weather and all I could see was snow and ice everywhere, piled in deep drifts. I waited until noon when the snow ploughs

continued on page 36

Cyclamen Mite

Earl T. Baker

I have found that it is very easy to get rid of the mites by the use of crude napthalene flakes. Do not confuse the crude flakes with the refined or with household moth-balls. The crude is much more effective for this purpose, is cheaper, and I have found it safe to use in the house without injury to the plant.

Simply place a teaspoonful of crude napthalene in the center of the saucer you customarily have under your plant, set the pot down in the saucer with the drainage hole directly over the flakes. Usually a slight twist and downward pressure is necessary to seat the pot firmly. Do this at your regular watering time and fill the saucer with water, and keep it full for about 24 hours.

A portion of the flakes are dissolved and drawn up into the soil. After 24 hours take up the pot, wash the outside with warm water, carefully drain the saucer, leaving the flakes that adhere to the bottom of the saucer.

The plant seems to absorb the fumes, and I have found that the mites just won't stay. Whether they die or not, or just go, I don't know, but unless the plant is too far gone to begin with, the crude napthalene has done the trick. I have always used the un-glazed pots; whether or not the above treatment will work with glazed pots, others will have to determine.

This entire treatment can be done in your home without moving your plant from your favorite position. The odor disappears as soon as you run the water into the saucer. The entire operation is simple.

I have found no ill effects in this treatment, in fact about twice a year I have given it to all my plants as a preventative, and also on new stock just received. Any other worms, bugs, or whatnots in the soil will succumb to this treatment. Several years ago I did have another pest similar to or the same as Helen Wilson describes in her new book as "Springtails". The "swarms" she describes disappeared after one treatment, and none have appeared since. I have often wondered if this treatment would not be effective against nematodes.

Getting down to the sad part:— Crude Napthalene Flakes, at least here in San Francisco, have disappeared from the nursery stocks. I do not know if this situation is true in the rest of the States or not. Nurseries here previously carried the flakes as packaged by the Portland Seed Company of Portland, Oregon. I wrote to this company asking where I could find the product, and they told me that the raw material was scarce, but that they were trying to find more and would come back on the market with the product as soon as possible.

Perhaps your own nursery supply house has some on hand or can tell you where the crude can be secured. If not, I would suggest that you write the Portland Seed Company for details on future distribution. It is my understanding that the crude napthalene is one of the by-products of the manufacture of gas from coal. Due to the current modern use of natural gas in many parts of the country, the shortage is understandable.

INFORMATION ! !

The following members cannot be located by these present addresses. Please help us find them.

Mrs. G. E. Lomas
2550 West 39th Ave.
Vancouver B. C. Canada.

Mrs. Ada E. Fyfe
Center Road, Port Credit
Ontario, Canada

Mrs. Ruth Pardee
5310 Glenway Ave.
Cincinnati, Ohio

Mrs. M. D. Slade
7759 N. W. 16th Ave.
Miami, Florida

Mrs. Henry Schnarr
Mount Vernon, Ill.

Mrs. M. R. Deland
4536 North Racine
Chicago 40, Ill.

Mrs. Fredrick D. Lewis
Wesleyville, Va.

AFRICAN VIOLETS,
BEGONIAS, TROPICAL
SHADE PLANTS
N.N.O.R. Insecticide 6 oz. $1.00 16 oz. $2.15 Hyponex 7 oz. 50¢ 1 lb. $1.00.
We ship anywhere April to November.
Visitors welcome, write for free list out after February 1.
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Route 1
Bunker Hill, Indiana

SPRING SHOW IN ALEXANDRIA

The Metropolitan Area African Violet Club held their December meeting at the Y. W. C. A. in Alexandria, Va. After a short business meeting and election of officers, the meeting was closed and the members enjoyed a Christmas party. Six new members were welcomed. Gifts were exchanged, names having been drawn at the November meeting. The new members received African Violets to add to their collections, the plants being donated by the club members.

The following officers were elected for 1949,

President, Mrs. Warren Gottshall
Vice-Pres., Mrs. Martha Husted
Secretary, Mrs. Eunice Toms
Treasurer, Mrs. George Shelton

The Club will stage its second annual show for benefit of the Cancer Fund on May 22nd, 1949. Historic Gadsby's Tavern in Alexandria, Virginia will be the setting for the exhibit also held in conjunction with the City's Bicentennial Celebration.

Your patronage of this worth-while cause will be appreciated, and in addition to the competitive show, arrangements are being made for an exhibit of seedlings and new plants originating in the Metropolitan District of Washington, D. C.

The following committee chairman have been appointed:

Gen. Show Chairman, Mr. Warren Gottshall
Publicity, Mrs. Martin Green
Classification, Mrs. E. Fonbuena
Judging & Hospitality, Mrs. W. W. LaMar
Properties & Photography, Mr. & Mrs. Wm. DeWitt
Finance, Mrs. Eunice Toms

ROCHESTER -- SOCIETY ORGANIZED

The African Violet Society of Rochester, New York and Vicinities organized in the fall and elected the following officers,

President
Mr. Floyd L. Johnson, Spencerport, N. Y.
1st Vice-President
Mrs. Leslie Aldridge, Canandaigua, N. Y.
2nd Vice-President
Mrs. Robert I. Slocomb, Rochester, N. Y.
Secretary
Mrs. Harry V. Thompson, Rochester, N. Y.
Treasurer
Mr. John R. Gent, Webster, N.Y.

This group, the second largest to date, has a membership of 82, and hold their meetings in the Rochester public library.

FLINT SOCIETY HAS FIVE CHAPTERS

On November 5, 1948 the Flint African Violet Society consisting of five chapters, Ionantha, Neptune, Amethyst, Tri by and Amarantha, entertained the members of McFarlan Home of Flint Michigan. This being World-wide Prayer day Mrs. Sherman White opened the program with a prayer for world peace. Mrs. James Atkins gave a brief history of the five chapters of the Society and what their study consisted of and also the clubs aim to bring a litt'e sunshine to the hearts of many others. Mrs. C. L. Larson gave a demonstration of planting leaves in Zonalite and presented each member of the home with a leaf and materials in which to start them. A general discussion followed with questions and answers about Violets.

Each person present, guests and members, introduced themselves by standing and giving their name. The poem, A Tree of Friendship, by Ann Campbell was read by Mrs. Atkins.

Mrs. Larson presented a blooming Violet to the eldest and youngest guest of the Home. Mrs. Alice Watkin being the youngest, Mrs. Hannah German being the eldest present. The eldest guest, Mrs. Amy Archer at the young age of ninty-five having gone out to church services, a plant was left for her also.

Mrs. Herbert Beavis and Mrs. Oscar Strand presented a plant to each member of the home, consisting of twenty varieties of Violets. Each plant had a red and white jacket tied with a white satin ribbon. Two Matrons were also recipients of African Violet plants.

Mrs. Atkins and Mrs. Wilbur Borton presided at the silver tea service, one at each end of a huge table which was covered with white linen centered with white mums. Tiny pastel baskets filled with bonbons was a gift to each member along with fancy cookies baked by members of the Flint African Violet Society.

Following tea the club members were taken on a tour through the lovely Home.

NEW SOCIETY IN COLORADO

The Colorado African Violet Society was organized on Feb. 25, 1948, with Mr. L. G. Kneeland elected president; Mrs. A. D. Meyers, Vice-Pres.; and Mrs. Theodore M. Greer, Secretary. Meetings are held in the homes on the 3rd Thursday of the month. The members are experimenting extensively with leaf and seed propagation, pollinating seeds, potting mixtures and systematic fertilizing methods. This enthusiastic group includes members from Denver, Golden Aurora, and Littleton, Colorado, and is the first group to be organized in this area.

RICHMOND SOCIETY

The African Violet Society of Richmond. Indiana held a public meeting on September 24, 1948 at 1:30 P.M. at Morton Center Auditorium. Between 200 and 300 people were in attendance to hear Mr. Henry Peterson of Peterson & Son Greenhouse, Cincinnati, Ohio speak on African Violets and show slides. Mr. Peterson flew his own plane which enabled him to bring many new varieties as well as the old well established ones for the club members and guests to view and purchase. Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Regional director, was also in attendance.

On October 29, 1948 the third African Violet show sponsored by the Richmond Society was held from 12 noon to 5 P.M. at Morton Center Lounge, Richmond. There were 174 violets entered. Ribbons and cash awards were given, the money for prizes being a donation of Joseph H. Hill of Hil.'s Roses. The good attendance and many out of town visitors prove the growing interest in African Violets in this area.

TRENTON SOCIETY OFFICERS

The African Violet Society of New Jersey in Trenton announces the election of the following,

President, Mrs. Elizabeth Lawton
Vice-Pres. & Treas., Mrs. L. P. Reichel
Corresp. Sect., Mrs. A. Newkirk
Recording Sect., Mrs. R. Staut
Reporter, Mrs. Knolls
Historian, Mrs. M. Thoburn

DELAWARE COUNTY, PENN. SHOW

The first show given by the African Violet Society of Delaware County will be held at the Community Methodist Church in Springfield, Delaware County, Pennsylvania on April 9, 1949 from 1 P. M. until 9 P.M.

In addition to the show, there will be a commercial exhibit, at which time a number of new plants will be displayed.

Not all back issues of the magazine are now in print.

Requests for these must be made on penny post cards and you will be notified which ones are available.

Do not send money until you are notified.

OMAHA CLUB

The Omaha African Violet Club, Inc. held their first annual business meeting on November 11, 1948 at the Joslyn Memorial.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year,

President, Mrs. Robert C. Adams
Vice-Pres., Mrs. Clarence Anderson
Secretary, Mrs. Elmer C. Munson
Treasurer, Mrs. Albert Norgren

Following the business meeting, movies of the First Midwest African Violet Exhibit, sponsored by the Omaha club on April 24 and 25, 1948, which were taken by Mrs. J. W. Hofmann, were shown.

Mrs. Hofmann, the retiring president, then took several pictures at this meeting.

Tea was served from a table beautifully appointed with a lace cloth and a centerpiece of yellow and white mums and yellow candles, Mrs. Woodruf presided at the tea service.

On November 30th the Omaha club celebrated their first birthday with a pot luck luncheon at the Joslyn Memorial, followed by a tour of the homes to see the many beautiful violets on display.

CHATTANOOGA SHOW

Mrs. W. W. Cox, president of the Chattanooga African Violet Society, was awarded grand prize for the greatest number of points in the society's fall flower show, held at the YWCA Green Room. She also won the sweepstakes award for arrangement.

Sweepstakes award for horticultural entries went to Mrs. Rowe Burgner.

Mrs. Charles Guedron's Bride's Table arrangement was judged "Queen of the Show".

Doctor's Library Table, arranged by Mrs. W. H. Nichols, and Occupational Therapy Exhibit, arranged by Arnold Burnett, were noncompetitive exhibits.

Mrs. Horace Humphries had a special exhibit of 50 plants, which included 10 different varieties. An outstanding Lamp Terrarium was arranged by Mrs. Ferrell Hill.

A special feature in the Hospital Section was a window garden arranged by Mesdames M. D. Chapman, Horace Humphries and W. C. Traylor.

Mrs. W. C. Humphries was general chairman of the show.

This is the four year old Blue Boy after being repotted. It is a beautiful plant as you can see.

New Life for Old Plants

Ruth Walsh

If you have an old violet you do not want to discard for sentimental reasons or otherwise, try doing what I did for my old Blue Boy.

This plant was the first Saintpaulia given to me here in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, four years ago and the gift of it started me raising African Violets. As it aged, it's stalk become twisted and gnarled, and the whole plant was hanging on the rim of the pot. The blossoms. though just as profuse, were somewhat smaller.

I decided to do something — even something drastic, if necessary as the plant had become so unsightly, I couldn't keep it as it was!

The stalk was cut off about 1½ inches below the crown, and the large outer leaves were removed, leaving a small well formed crown. The buds and flowers were all pinched out.

Then the stalk of this small crown was put in water in a small glass. It looked just like an old fashioned nose-gay when I had put a lace paper doily under the bottom row of leaves. I used it on our coffee table all the time it was rooting.

In about two weeks a great quantity of fine roots had begun to grow from the stalk, especially where the old leaves had been removed.

I potted it the following week in fine sifted woods soil in a three inch pot. Now two months later I have a lovely symmetrical plant covered with blossoms and new life has certainly been given to an old Violet!

An Orchid Beauty crown being re-rooted and used as a decoration on the coffee table. The flowers are verbena, but I have used many different kinds; the crown is so lovely and green all flowers look well with it.

Success Story

Ada Magill

As weekend guest over Labor Day, my cousin fairly drooled over my African Violet plants. Repeatedly she said, " How I wish I could grow Violets like yours!"

I had given her leaves and small plants several years ago. One by one the leaves rotted and the plants died. Each time there was a funeral she vowed never to try it again, saying "Stoker heat just does not agree with violets."

Again I wished upon her an Amethyst plant and leaves of Blue Boy, Bicolor, Norseman and Orchid Beauty along with an African Violet Magazine, and urged her to join an African Violet Pigeon.

"You know, when I started growing Violets, four years ago, I learned the hard way too. A beautiful plant in a six inch pot was give me upon my return from the hospital. It was covered with blossoms and did bloom for the space of several months. Then — oh, then, the leaves began to get soft and transparent, until one by one there was no more plant. That happened to any number of plants that were given to me. Then four years ago this fall Mother came home with a Blue Boy in a two inch pot and said, "I bought this today and if it doesn't live and bloom I will keep on buying them till one does." The threat must have frightened the little fellow because it grew and had only one blossom on it up to March. It had developed two crowns. So after reading Helen Van Pelt Wilson's folder put out by one of the current magazines, I went to work with fear and trembling fingers to repot an African Violet for the first time. For a few days it looked pretty limp but by the end of a week it was a real joy to see the leaves take on a fresh crisp look again. That experience gave me courage, and, as soon as the plants were well established, I plucked a few leaves and tried my hand at propagation. However, when the parent plants were about a year and a half old they gradually turned up their toes and no matter what I did they would not be revived. As you see I have continued to collect different varieties and learn by trial and error until the books by Helen Van Pelt Wilson, Mrs. Odom and Mr. Lindsey came out. I have read everything I could get my hands on about African Violets.

The African Violet Magazine is my pet, I can hardly wait from one issue to the next and never fail to read every word of it. I have profited by any number of experiences writers for it have related. After

continued at bottom of next column

YOUR HINT HUNTER

Phyllis Ferrall
Route 5 — Box 551
Battle Creek, Mich.

Your many letters commending us on the new "Hint Hunt" column are heartwarming. Thank you for all your kindness and words of encouragement. Keep the hints coming in, as this is your column to share with all our friends.

I have been reading about and trying artificial lighting.

I had several hundred tiny plants in an unheated outside building. Having no room in my living quarters for them, and of necessity getting them some warmth, I took them to the basement. I placed them on card tables and suspended 60 watt electric light extensions, 12 inches above the plants. The foliage is much greener and plants sturdier. I now take any puny plant down there to perk it up. Even my babies in vermiculite are there. I keep lights on about ten hours daily. This method is used in only a fairly warm basement. Try yellow or orange bulb.

A hint from Mrs. A. G. White, Asheville, N. C., "Whenever my African Violets start growing downward as they are inclined to do in some varieties, I place them beneath an eastern or southern window on a low stand and let the light pull the leaves upward. In two or three weeks the leaves are up and the plant has a much nicer appearance. It also eliminates losing the many leaves which rot when they rest on the rim of the pot".

Mrs. Annie Astalski, Clarence, N. Y. sends this hint. "In rooting leaves in water put a small stone in bottom of container, the leaf will root sooner.

I have purchased some lovely little birds and placed among my violets on the shelves. The effect is well worth while.

Mary Mullarky, Huntington, W. Va. tells us rain water or melted snow is much better to root leaves as it does not contain the chemicals most city water contains.

I have been most successful in using tiny baby food cans, filled with vermiculite for rooting leaves in record time. Sixteen days after placing leaf in vermiculite the tiny mouse-ears appeared.

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all, it is only by experience that we have the courage to try again and again. So if you fail once don't give up but TRY! TRY! AGAIN. Then if you really want the bug to bite you attend an African Violet Convention. I did last May at Cincinnati and came home with such an added abundance of enthusiasm my husband said he would have to build an addition to the house. Don't give up. You can grow them too."

Mite, Water Bath and Selenate

Mrs. Neil C. Miller
(With a little help, here and there, from her husband.)

In the spring of 1947 I had a nice collection of about twenty varieties of Saintpaulias with many more coming on in various stages of development, propagated both from seeds and cuttings. I saw several varieties that I wanted listed by a well known nursery. I ordered them. When the shipment arrived in April one plant didn't look right. It had no growing crown; no small leaves in the center; the one flower stalk was only an inch long and curled back on itself; the single blossom was small, misshapen and blotched; the leaf petioles were covered with brownish hair; and the leaves were limp and lying flat.

Within three months I came to know these as typical signs of advanced mite injury, but at that time all I knew was that the plant didn't look right. I wanted to throw it out but my husband insisted that such a well known nursery would not send out diseased plants, and that whatever was wrong with it was only temporary or was the result of the trip through the mails. So I placed it with my other plants on my kitchen window sill.

What a mistake that was! No matter from what source I secure a plant now it stays by itself, out of all contact with any other plants, for several weeks, so that I have an opportunity to observe it and decide whether it needs to be selenated.

During May and June there occurred a series of circumstances that kept me from giving my plants adequate attention: I was sick for several weeks; my little boy had a tonsillectomy, lost a lot of blood, and had to be nursed back to health; and I had extra cooking to do (ironically enough, for men who were building a greenhouse for my African Violets). During that time I saw my plants getting sicker and sicker but I just couldn't do anything about it. It was in early July before I could give my violets the attention they needed and by that time they were a sorry mess. The original plant from the nursery was dead, and about twenty plants were as far advanced as the nursery plant had been when received, so I threw them out. About fifty more plants were in some stage or other of collapse, and day by day other plants were developing symptoms.

I think it would be well at this point to describe the various stages in the development of mite injury so it will not be necessary to do it step by step later, although at this point in my actual narrative I had not yet even heard of cyclamen mite.

a. If the plant is flowering the first indication of trouble will probably be that flower stems will be very short, sometimes not even getting out of the crown leaves. The blossoms will be small, frequently will not open fully, or some petals won't open at all, and the flowers will also be off-color or blotched. Blooming will soon cease.

b. The next stage (and it may occur almost at the same time as the blossom evidence) is the deterioration of the leaves and crown of the plant. New leaves growing in the crown become mis shapen, one side of the leaf sometimes being much smaller than the other. Frequently the leaves will be thickened and have rough and irregular edges. Leaves become very brittle. As successive leaves appear in the crown they become smaller and smaller. Leaves and petioles become shorter and shorter, petioles finally becoming practically non-existent. So the crown becomes a mass of malformed small leaves, lose the normal green color and turn a sickly greenish gray, the grayness of which is enhanced by the thick growth of hairs all over the leaves and petioles. The leaves frequently cup either upwards or downwards. The grayish color is actually a fore-runner of death as it increases until the leaves completely wither and dry up.

c. Before the crown dies completely the older, larger leaves collapse onto the sides of the pot, and become wilted and dull in appearance. Hair on the petioles frequently becomes brown in color.

d. The final appearance of a badly infested plant (if you can stand to have it around that long) is a plant without blossoms or blossom stems, a center having only a few gray husks of leaves remaining and entirely devoid of any green portions or signs of growth, and a few wilted leaves at the end of hairy brown petioles hanging limply and forlornly over the edge of the pot.

I had plants in all of the above stages by the first of July.

I had never heard of cyclamen mite at that time, so had no idea what the difficulty was. I had a copy of Helen Van Pelt Wilson's booklet on African Violets (published by Ladies Home Journal in 1945, — her book "African Violets" had not yet been published) and I got my first inkling of what the trouble was from her description of cyclamen mite injury. The booklet wasn't very helpful in suggesting a cure, as it said the mites worked inside the terminal buds and were out of reach of sprays. The only method of control offered was to destroy infested plants. I had already done plenty of that and was faced with the likelihood of having to do much more.

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Mite, Water Bath and Selenate

But at least Miss Wilson's booklet had given me some idea what the difficulty might be. I wrapped a plant up (very carefully, I thought) and sent it to the United States Department of Agriculture Research Station at Beltsville, Maryland, and sent with it a letter explaining my suspicions of cyclamen mite. The reply came back that the plant had been so badly smashed in transit that diagnosis was impossible. But from my description of the trouble and what few leaves he had been able to salvage, Dr. Floyd F. Smith, who answered, said that the plant injury appeared to be that of cyclamen mite. He suggested the water bath treatment and enclosed a copy of an article written by him which had appeared in the Florists Review for Feb. 20, 1936, "Major Ills of Saintpaulias Evidenced in Condition of Their Foliage", which gave detailed instructions for the water bath treatment.

Incidentally, the article treats of two other ills of Saintpaulias besides cyclamen mite: ring spot and stunt. The cause of ring spot apparently had not been determined then, but the author rightly suggests that the symptoms could be avoided by cultural practices. There is a long description of stunt which visibly affects plants much like mite damage. I wonder if stunt has been entirely overcome since 1936, I have never heard of stunt as a disease (in contradistinction to stunting as a result of improper treatment) anywhere but in Dr. Smith's article.

The basic directions for the water bath treatment are simple: Immerse the plant, pot and all, in water at 110°F. for fifteen minutes. However a number of supplementary instructions must also be included:

a. Provide some way of adding warmer water so that the temperature is held at 110°F.

b. Keep the water in motion with a paddle or some other device.

c. Open the crowns of plants to release air bubbles.

d. Be sure every part of the plant is immersed, that not even one leaf tip reaches above the surface of the water.

e. Skim off any debris (blossoms, leaves, compost residues from the potting soil, etc.) that may float to the top. Do this as soon as the debris appears, but be particularly sure that there is none on the surface when the plant is removed. (Mites could cling to the debris and be picked up as the plant is removed.)

f. Wash your hands carefully with soap and hot water before removing the plant (to kill any mites on your hands).

g. After treating the plant place it where it can not be reinfected from other plants, or from watering saucers, trays, etc.

h. Be extremely careful that you do not re-infest the plants by carrying mites on your hands from infested to treated plants.

i. Keep plants out of direct sunlight for twenty-four hours.

Immediately upon receipt of the instructions I set to work to treat my plants. I carried out the operation in my kitchen sink. I used a dairy thermometer and kept the temperature betwen 110.0°F. and 110.5°F. To insure the accuracy of the thermometer my husband checked it against a Bureau of Standards Certified Thermometer, it was less than 0.2°F. off, which is exceptionally good for a commercial thermometer. I placed the plants on scalded drain boards as I removed them from the bath. It took me fourteen hours to run all my plants through, and while there were any non-treated plants in the house I didn't touch a treated plant nor did anyone else do so. I scrubbed the shelves, stands and window ledges with Lysol before returning the plants to them, and I boiled all saucers or trays used in watering before I used them again

After the twenty-four hour waiting period, I returned the plants to their usual places, happy in the thought that the mites were gone and that my plants would soon be normal again.

For a while they did just as Dr. Smith's article predicted. None died, they all stood still for a few days, and then most of them started to grow. I threw several away, not because the treatment had killed them but because they were too sick-looking to offer much promise of being worth future care.

However, some plants didn't make much recovery in four weeks and I began to be very suspicious that they were still infested. I had sent a plant to the New Jersey State Agricultural Experiment Station at New Brunswick just prior to receiving the reply from Beltsville. They said the trouble definitely was cyclamen mite. That was before water bath treatment, of course. Now I loaded several treated plants into the car and took them to New Brunswick. Dr. C. C. Hamilton inspected them and had no difficulty finding mite by examining them under a binocular microscope.

I felt sick. If mite had survived the treatment on some plants they had probably survived on others. Or if they were present on only a few plants it would be next to impossible to tell on which plants they were, so infested plants could not be isolated with certainty. The possibilities of mite running through all my plants again loomed with horrible imminence.

So I set about the task of water bath treating them all the second time, being as careful as I had been the first time, and being particularly careful to separate

Illustrations by
Neil C. Miller

Fig. 1. No pictures were made of Mrs. Miller's plants while mites were on them in 1947, and she had no mite-attacked plants to photograph when the article was written. After considerable searching she finally located the above plants in another collection. They are all in the second stage of mite damage development as described in the text. But they are not exactly typical of normal mite development. The crowns of at least two and probably all of the plants had been removed by the original owner in the mistaken idea that mite damage could be arrested by so doing.

A plant showing normal evidence of mite development will, in the second stage of development, have leaves varying in size and distortion from exceedingly tiny knots in the center to perfectly normal leaves on the outside. Of the three above, the White Lady at the left is most nearly typical. The Mentor Boy in the center, being a more vigorous grower, has managed to keep its older leaves in good condition, but the small leaves in the center show dwarfing and distortion. The Pink Beauty at the right is about ready to collapse into the third stage.

These plants were all water-bathed about two months before the pictures were taken.

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the leaf petioles to release air bubbles in the crowns. The reason I was so careful to separate the petioles was that my husband, in discussing the treatment with several other chemists and physicists, had concluded that the most likely source of failure would be that there would be tiny air pockets or areas of petiole-to-petiole contact where water would not enter and that any mites in them would probably survive the treatment.

Again I set the plants on scalded drain boards, didn't touch treated plants while an infested plant was in the house, Lysolled all window sills and stands, and scalded all watering dishes and trays.

Again none of the plants died, they all stood still for a while, and then most of them started to grow. Again I threw several plants away, not because the treatment killed them, but because they didn't seem to be worth future care.

As I didn't want to have to go clear to New Brunswick to have the plants examined for mite after the second treatment, I purchased a small hand lens from Sears Roebuck.

I managed to secure leaflets from several commercial growers on their method of handling mite. They all used pyrethrum-rotenone mixtures. But none of them went further than to say that they used them as mite controls, not once did I find any claims for mite extermination. As extermination was what I was after I didn't seriously consider any pyrethrum-rotenone sprays or dusts.

Dr. Smith's article had contained a reference to Circular 301 of the Department of Agriculture, "The Cyclamen Mite and the Broad Mite and Their Control," written by him and published in 1933. The booklet is extremely difficult to get, but by continued effort I was able to obtain one.

The booklet summarizes several years' work by Dr. Smith and his associates in studying the cyclamen mite and the broad mite, and it is a veritable mine of information. It does not report any actual experimentation on African Violets, the words "African Violet" and "Saintpaulia" do not occur in it. This merely indicates that in the early 1930's the African Violet was not an important commercial plant; it does not reflect on the thoroughness of Dr. Smith's investigations.

I am not going to attempt to abstract the booklet, but I am going to summarize some of the things in it, as they are basic in any discussion of mite injury and control:

a. There are two mites, the cyclamen mite (Tarsonemus pallidus Banks), the broad mite (Tarsonemus latus Banks), and possibly a third (Tarsonemus translucens Green). They have frequently been confused, even in careful studies. They are so very small (about 1/75th of an inch long) as to be practically invisible to the naked eye. They feed on leaves or terminal buds by scratching the surface and drinking the liberated sap. They are wingless, spread from plant to plant by contact (leaf-to-leaf, or leaf-to-hand-to-leaf), do not hibernate, and must be on a host plant, i.e., can not live for any length of time on pots, benches, etc. Life cycles vary, but are less than two weeks for all kinds of mite. Cyclamen mite damage is generally indicated by leaves curling upward, broad mite damage by leaves curling downwards.

b. Plants that have been found to be affected by one or other mites include: chrysanthemum, banana copperleaf, pigweed, amaranthus, snapdragon, wax begonia, sugar beet, Madeira vine, bouvardia, China-aster, redpepper, Marguerite, orange, cosmos, cigar plant, cyclamen, dahlia, rocket larkspur, strawberry, fuchsia, flame-ray gerbera, cotton, Chinese hibiscus, snapweed, sweet potato, morning glory, Linden broadleaf, lantana, matrimony vine, tomato, mango, tobacco, woodsorrel, Boston ivy, geranium, avocado, petunia, bean, stevia, water-pepper, blackberry, curly dock, German ivy, potato, marigold, torenia, verbena, purslane, pea and zinnia. No claim is made that this is a complete list nor is there any implication that mite are generally found on any of them. But as the list includes many common garden or house plants there is a clear indication that bringing any other plant into contact with your African Violets is to introduce the possibility of infestaton. Many of the above plants can resist mite attack better than violets can, hence will not give visual notice that they are infested.

c. Methods of control discussed are: dusting with finely divided sulphur, diatomaceous earth, pyrethrum and/or rotenone, and hydrated lime; spraying with white oil emulsion; and fumigation with calcium cyanide and naphthalene. All of these had various degrees of success (or failure) on different plants. The discussion concludes: "None of the foregoing fumigants, dusts and sprays which were effective against the broad mite were completely successful against the cyclamen mite . . . The latter is not only concealed in the distorted plant parts, within the leaf tissue, or in the crown

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Fig. 2. This White Lady shows damage that is fairly typical in a plant that became infested at about 6-8 months of age. The outer leaves are normal in development, but are beginning to wilt in the general weakening of the plant. The medium sized leaves are a trifle distorted, showing that they were past the shoot stage when infested. The smaller leaves clumped in the center just never had a chance; mite attacked them the moment they made their appearance.

where it is protected from dust and sprays, but even when exposed it is also more resistant to the two fumigants than the broad mite. The successful control of the cyclamen mite is not precluded by the present study, since proper repetition of applications through the growing period of the plant may so reduce the infestation and retard spread that a commercial crop can be marketed. However, spraying, dusting and fumigations with various materials have failed in the hands of experienced greenhousemen, and the losses have continued high each year. Because of the failure of these methods, the mites have become established on plants and a complete or partial crop loss has resulted."

d. Complete instructions are given for the water bath method of treatment. (I have seen credit given otherwise for originating the water bath method. While I have no desire to provoke controversy as to who actually originated it, I simply want to point out that Dr. Smith published it in 1933, reporting on experiments that went back to 1931.)

It should be stated again that no work on, or any mention of, Saintpaulias is contained in the booklet. Also, the point should be noted that failure to control cyclamen mite successfully by dusting, spraying or fumigation in 1933 might not at all mean that adequate controls were not available in 1947. But it did seem significant that pyrethrum-rotenone had failed in carefully conducted experiments in 1933, but were reported as the only controls used commercially in 1947.

Now to resume the narration of my story: Within three weeks after the second water bath treatment, most of the plants were growing satisfactorily. But some few looked suspicious, just as some had after the first treatment. I used the hand lens and found mite on several plants again.

I delayed the third water bath treatment until October. My greenhouse was nearing completion, requiring only the installation of heat, and, being freshly constructed of new lumber and painted throughout, could not possibly have any mites in it. Despite all my Lysol treatments, I still had a lurking fear that the mites lived somewhere in the framework of the windows and reinfested the plants when returned there. Dr. Smith's article had stated plainly enough that they lived on plants only and would quickly die if plants were not in reach, but at the time I was afraid to believe it. Subsequent experience has convinced me that Dr. Smith's report is entirely correct, that the mites must live on a host plant, don't hibernate, and don't lodge in window sills, flower stands, or greenhouse benches.

Early in October heat was installed in the greenhouse. I gave all plants a third water bath treatment. And this time I was again as meticulously careful to hold temperatures, have complete immersion, clean out debris, wash my own hands, etc., etc. as I had been before. I moved the plants from treatment directly to the greenhouse

And three weeks later I found mite again.

Even before giving the third treatment I had little faith left in the water bath method, so I continued search for other means of control. My husband went over to the DuPont Pest Control Station at Wilmington, and talked to Dr. H. F. Dietz. Dr. Dietz had nothing concrete to offer as duPont had done no work on ornamentals since the war started, and didn't know when they would get around to do any work on them due to the tremendous backlog of more pressing problems. He did review and discuss several possible control

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methods, and pointed out the weaknesses of each. He concurred with my husband's belief that air pockets or contact areas at the bases of the leaf petioles would allow some mites to survive each water bath treatment, hence the water bath treatment would not accomplish mite extermination.

But most important of all, Dr. Dietz advised getting in touch with Dr. W. E. Blauvelt, of Cornell University. He had heard that Dr. Blauvelt had done some work for commercial growers of Saintpaulias in New York and that he has been successful.

So I immediately wrote to Dr. Blauvelt.

As this marks the end of my experience with the water bath method I shall make these concluding remarks concerning it: I consider it a failure. I don't think it is possible for anyone to use more care in carrying it out than I did, particularly in the second and third treatments, when all my plants, even baby seedlings with only two leaves, were treated. I do think that each treatment cleaned up many plants entirely and killed a very large percentage of the mites on the others. One month after treatment the plants looked rather healthy with no widespread signs of infestation. Perhaps if I hadn't had hand lens and microscope and expert technical assistance in identifying the mites, I too, would have concluded the water bath treatment was successful and would have been singing its praises. And six months later, after the mites had had time to multiply, I would have been wondering which new plant carried in the second infestation. After many discussions with many people, I have been able to develop only three possible explanations for the failure of the method:

a. I did not remove soil from around the crowns of plants in 4-inch pots. This was recommended by Dr. Smith, but I didn't do it. This could be the sole cause for the failure, although I doubt it.

b. Perhaps all living mites were killed but the eggs were not.

c. The air pockets and contact areas at the bases of the petioles mentioned before. This I believe to be an inherent weakness of the method.

If no other method were available and I had to make the water bath method work I would first try removing the soil from around the crowns of plants in larger pots. Then I would try repeating the treatment at proper intervals to kill mite between hatching and egg-laying. If neither of these worked, I would increase the immersion time. If the mites survive the regular 15-minute treatment in air pockets at the bases of the petioles, there ought to be a length of treatment that would heat all plant tissue (stem and petioles) high enough to kill the mite. Whether the plant would survive this extended treatment is another matter.

And with this I leave the water bath method. Anybody who wants it can have it. I will stick to selenate.

Dr. Blauvelt's prompt reply came as music to my ears. I quote from it: "I have developed a new method of control for this pest, that has given us complete control in repeated experiments with a suitable number of plants without plant injury. During the past three years the method has been used extensively by hundreds of commercial growers with the treatment of hundreds of thousands of plants without reports of injury and with very satisfactory results. The method involves watering the soil with a very dilute solution of sodium selenate. This material is then taken up through the roots of the plants and poisons the sap. When the mites feed they get the poison along with their food and are killed. This method gives continuous automatic control against reinfestation from infested plants which may be brought in and mixed with the treated plants." This seemed to be exactly what I had been hoping for. I secured some selenate at once.

Dr. Blauvelt's mixing instructions had been developed for greennousemen who work on a large scale: "Dissolve 100 grams of sodium selenate in one gallon of water. Dilute one quart of this stock solution to 25 gallons." These directions result in an end solution of one gram per gallon. So I made my solutions by dissolving one gram of selenate in one gallon of water.

Dr. Blauvelt in his carefully controlled experiments with this solution had used one fluid ounce per 3-inch pot and two fluid ounces per 4-inch pot. He said there was a wide margin of safety and more could be used if desired.

It was now the first of November and I was exceedingly weary of fighting mite. I had lost most of my old plants, including a Blue Boy which had been in bloom continuously for over four years. And for all I then knew the selenate treatment could be just as disappointing as the water bath treatment. I decided it was kill or cure: I doubled the dose. I gave each 4-inch pot four ounces of the solution. I set the 2-inch and 3-inch pots in a tray of solution and let them take up what they would. They took up about three ounces on the average, a triple or greater dose.

For several weeks the plants looked pretty sick; I was afraid I had killed them all. In the middle of December, I examined

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the plants with the glass. I found mite on one plant. I immediately gave every plant a repeat dosage: two ounces per 4-inch pot, one ounce per 3 inch pot, all they would take up for smaller pots.

The one plant on which I had found mite I set by itself and have examined it periodically since then. I have not seen another mite. The plant has recovered and shows little evidence of its ordeal. It has been in continuous bloom since March (1948). I still allow it to sit where I placed it in December. I regard it as a monument to victory in an eight month battle.

By the middle of January the plants had largely recovered and were beginning to appear healthy again. Blooms started appearing in February, and I have had a profusion of blooms continuously since then.

No plant has shown any trace of new mite damage since December. I have raised well over five hundred plants, standing generally in leaf-to-leaf contact. If there were any mite present an infestation would have developed before this. I have every reason to believe that the selenate treatment exterminated them.

I did not lose a single plant directly because of the selenate treatment, even though I severely over-dosed them. In the intervening months I have thrown away several of the older plants because they did not recover sufficiently to be worth space and attention (and their progeny were coming on). But their failure to recover can not be ascribed directly to the selenate, they were already seriously weakened by several months of mite damage and three water bath treatments.

However, two instances have been reported to me of loss of individual plants after selenate treatment. I don't know the condition of the plants before treatment. Perhaps they were in the same condition as the plants I threw away after the water bath treatments: they were so far gone they should have been discarded before treatment instead of after.

My plants were badly weakened by eight months of mite and three water bath treatments before selenation. They were also over-dosed terrifically. And for several weeks last winter they were too cold. I had only single glazing in the greenhouse and cold air fell from the panes and collected on the benches. And the humidity was low due to the water freezing out of the air onto the panes, the low humidity causing the soil in the pots to be colder than the air due to the wet-bulb effect. Ripping the sides off the benches and Cel O-Glass tacked to the inside of the sash cured both difficulties. I mention these

Fig. 3. The up-curled leaves of this Mentor Boy are typical of cyclamen mite damage. The curling is caused by a plant defense mechanism. The mites feed by scratching the surface of the growing bud or shoot and sucking the liberated sap. To resist the scratching the leaves develop a corky layer.

This surface cork layer does not grow so rapidly as the normal tissue beneath. The lower surface of the leaf thus grows more rapidly than the upper and gradually curves around it.

things, weakened condition, over-dosage, and being too cold, because I feel that they had an important bearing on several undesirable conditions which my plants developed after selenation which I don't think were due solely to selenation, but which I feel I should report:

a. I have lost some twenty seedlings this past summer because they didn't develop properly, the foliage grew all right for several months, then just seemed to stop. Examination always showed inadequate roots. These plants were only tiny babies when water-bathed, and some actually floated out of the pots. Possibly the roots were damaged then. Or the low temperature may have been to blame. Or maybe the selenate is solely responsible.

b. I have lost about a dozen plants this past summer due to crown rot. This number is probably not excessive, but it is a larger proportion than I ever had before.

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c. My plants gave off a rather unpleasant odor for some ten weeks after selenation. I don't know whether this is a normal result of normal treatment or not. I have not noticed it after smaller dosages that I have given to newer plants recently. Maybe my plants gave it off last winter because of the terrific over-dosage I gave them.

d. My plants recovered from selenation more slowly than they did from water bath treatment. They still had twisted, wilted, leaves two months after treatment. I doubt that this is normal because I have not seen it in properly treated plants. Dr. Blauvelt did not indicate that recovery would be so slow, and commercial growers could not tolerate such slow recovery. More likely it was due to over-dosage and low temperature in the greenhouse during the recovery period.

e. Certain varieties, notably whites and pinks, show residual leaf curling much longer than others. On a very few of my plants I can still (October, 1948) see slight signs of selenate distortion.

f. The leaves of many plants were noticeably darkened, some even having a slightly bronzed effect. This was not particularly undesirable, as it frequently brought out veining that does not ordinarily appear. On some of the seedlings I would very much like to preserve the effect, but am quite certain I can't.

Experience will have to be acquired and reported by others before these conditions can be definitely shown to be either direct results of the selenate treatment or incidental by-products of the conditions of treatment which I now consider them to be.

During all my work, I was careful not to get any selenate solution on the leaves of the plants. Dr. Blauvelt pointed out that if any did get on the foliage it should be washed off to prevent burning.

Now for a few general comments on the selenate treatment:

a. It will clean up an infestation. I don't know whether I had cyclamen mite or broad mite, or both. (Possibly both, as I had both up-curved and down-curved leaves.) And my infestation wasn't heavy at beginning of selenation, due to repeated water bath treatments. But if it will completely clean up a slight infestation I see no reason to believe it would not cure a heavier one.

b. Many plants will show definite reaction to it, some will probably wilt badly. My original plants last winter reacted to an alarming extent, but they were over-selenated and were weak before treatment. Young plants that I have treated recently have shown no reaction at all. It is beginning to appear that reaction to proper selenate dosage is roughly proportional to the age of the plant, being little or none for young vigorously growing plants, and being serious even to death for older plants, but my own experience will not allow me to state this definitely. Nor can I state with any definite assurance what the recovery time will be. My plants required up to two months and longer as explained previously. I wish I could be more explicit on details of reaction and recovery, but I can't. I have had experience with over-selenated plants of all ages and with normally selenated younger plants. I have not had any experience with normally selenated older plants that most people will have to treat.

None of my plants was blooming when treated so I don't know whether blossom drop would be occasioned or not, but there is no residual bloom-deterring effect that I have been able to recognize.

c. As indicated just above, restraint should be exercised in treating plants more than one year old or plants already in poor condition. The chance of possible loss exists, although I didn't lose any myself. The experiences of those who did lose plants indicates that selenation of old or weakened plants should be considered as a calculated risk with the possibility considered that the cure may also be fatal. But I believe that a method of slight dosage (say one-half ounce at four week intervals) could be worked out so that the mites would be killed before the mites or the selenate killed the plants.

d. Because of its reaction on older plants, selenate can not be regarded as an un-mixed blessing. Doubtless, many plants will be killed because it is used. And, unfortunately, the plants most likely to be lost will be the older prized favorites of the collections. But once mite gets into a collection the plants are ultimately doomed anyhow: there is just no end to the throwing-away process. So it would appear better to selenate, take what plant loss results, and get rid of mite completely so that younger plants coming on can have a chance for normal development. However, that is a decision which each grower must make for herself.

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e. The crown-rot mentioned above and some other circumstances which it would be difficult to detail make me feel that selenate has had a weakening effect on plant crowns. I can't describe it, I'm by no means certain it exists, I simply mention it so that others may be on the look-out for it.

f. Logically, use of sodium selenate should be regarded as a mite preventive rather than as a mite cure. This would involve selenating healthy plants that have no apparent need for treatment. But at present I can't recommend it. My own experience would indicate pre-selenation to be all right, but experience of others does not confirm this. More will need to be known about the lethal effect of selenate on older plants before pre-selenation can be recommended as standard procedure.

Where can selenate be obtained? Probably not from your local druggist, as it is not an ordinary drug stock. but it will do no harm to ask. It can be gotten from Plant Products Corp., Blue Point, Long Island, N. Y., in 100 gram, pound and larger quantities. It can be obtained from Eimer and Amend, 635 Greenwich St.. New York 14, N. Y., or Fisher Scientific Co. at either 717 Forbes St., Pittsburg, Pa., or 2109 Locust St., St. Louis 3, Mo., at 5 grams for fifty cents. 10 grams for seventy five cents, or 25 grams for one dollar fifty cents. I bought an excess last fall, so I still have some which I would sell at the above prices. Because of its poisonous nature it can not be sent by parcel post, hence has to travel by express.

I had facilities available for accurately weighing one gram quantities. Most people will not be so fortunate (although they can always get it done at a drug store). so I have worked out an alternate method: A level quarter teaspoonful is almost exactly a gram. Use the quarter teaspoon measure in a set of dime store measuring spoons. Be sure the material is free of lumps and the measure is not heaped. Don't compact the material in the measure by tapping or pressing. Simply fill the measure with the lump-free material, strike off level, and dump into a gallon jug.

If you add the water slowly and shake the jug while adding it the selenate will all be in solution before the jug is filled. Cork the jug and invert a couple times to insure thorough mixing. Label. The solution is now ready to use.

Most homes will have a vessel in which fluid ounces can be measured. If not, a marked bottle or a graduate can be obtained from any drug store.

I think the heavy dosages I used and the December repeat dosage were entirely unnecessary and did more harm than good. The quantities recommended by Dr. Blauvelt are adequate and should be used: two fluid ounces for 4-inch pots, one fluid ounce for smaller pots. The best method of application is to let the plants become dry enough that they should be watered and then to water from the bottom. In this way the solution will be taken up quickly and none will get on the leaves.

Two or three weeks are required for the plants to absorb enough selenate to begin to free themselves of mite.

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Below:

Fig. 4. This Pink Beauty is about ready to give up and collapse its outer leaves onto the edge of the pot.

The hairy growth all over the crown leaves is another defense merchanism that plants frequently develop to ward off insect attack. The projecting and interlacing hairs form a barrier that larger insects can't penetrate. But growth of hair is no protection against cyclamen mite; they are so tiny they go right through it.

As the material is more or less evenly distributed throughout the plant, some of it is lost whenever a leaf or a flower stem is removed. Eventually the concentration will become so low that mites will no longer be killed. So repeat dosages are necessary. Dr. Blauvelt suggested repeat dosages at three month intervals, giving the first dose when the rooted seedlings are well established. I haven't selenated that early or that often. My older plants were all so heavily over-selenated that they ought to carry adequate protection still. What to do with incoming plants is a problem: If they haven't been selenated already they should be, but if they have been selenated previously further treatment isn't necessary and might give some set-back. I keep them isolated and decide by observation what to do. Generally I selenate. When I don't selenate, I reason that even if I am wrong in regarding the plant as selenated and it does actually carry mite my other plants carry their own defenses so no great harm can result.

Now a word as to the poisonous nature of sodium selenate. It is a poison, and a violent poison, both to plants and animals. It must be treated with the respect due all poisons and with the added respect due a violent one. The dry materials and the solutions should always be carefully labeled and placed where they can't be mistaken for less dangerous materials. Small quantities should never be allowed to sit around away from the main container. Any spills should be immediately cleaned up and the cleaning-up materials properly disposed of. None should ever enter the mouth, nose, ears, or eyes; if some does enter by accident it should be washed off with copius amounts of water. If any is swallowed vomiting should be induced and a doctor called. Any utensils or devices (such as the measuring spoons used in preparing solutions) should be immediately washed. Any dry material falling on the hands during solution preparation should be washed off. The hands and all measuring and treating vessels should be washed after using the solution. The dry material and the solutions should be kept out of reach of children and irresponsible persons.

During my conversations and correspondence with Beltsville Research Station, New Jersey State Agriculture Experiment Station, DuPont Pest Control Station, Ohio State Agricultural Experiment Station, New Hampshire State University and Cornell University I received comments on several other methods of control. The following notes on each should be regarded only as indications of general feeling, not as final evaluations:

a. Pyrethrum-rotenone sprays or dusts, with or without nicotine. Have been extremely useful in the past as they were about the only materials available. But as they do not give complete kills their effectiveness is dependent on the diligence of the spraying or dusting program.

b. Piperonyl cyclohexanone. Of little value by itself, may increase the toxicity of pyrethrum-rotenone mixtures. (I tried this, it gave knock-down but not kill.)

c. Loro. Varying degrees of success reported. May be a control if used at the proper intervals. May cause permanent stunting, slight overdose will kill plants. (I tried this at the concentrations recommended for cyclamen mite on cyclamen. It killed the violets immediately.)

d. Azobenzene fumigation or dusting with Azofume 70. Has possibilities and will probably ultimately be successful. Dosage will have to be carefully controlled.

e. Naphthalene fumigation. Too narrow a range between concentrations that will kill the mites and concentrations that will kill the plants. However, a good rule of thumb technique is claimed. But be sure you are firmly attached to somebody's thumb before trying it; I have seen plants so thoroughly killed by it they appeared to have been boiled.

f. Paradichlorbenzene fumigation. (A DuPont product sold under such trade names as Dichloricide, Parafume, etc., the material you put in clothes, rugs, etc., to kill moths). Essentially the same as naphthalene: Not wide enough range between concentrations that will kill the mite and concentrations that will kill the plants. Some one ought to be able to work out a paper bag technique such as is used with naphthalene. (But don't start with your prized plants.)

g. Lethane. Probably the same as Loro in effect.

h. Methylbromide fumigation. Kills the mites, and the plants too.

i. Hexaethyltetraphosphate, alkylarylthianophosphate, and hydroxypentamethylflaban. Under test, but too early to make any predictions.

The above appraisals were as of November, 1947. Some of the newer materials may have been proven effective and workable by this time.

A lot of interesting conjecture can be built around the fact that commercial growers until very recently had relied (because nothing else was available) on

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Fig. 5. This enlargement of the center of the Mentor Boy in Fig. 1 and Fig. 3 shows clearly how center leaves become dwarfed, distorted and hairy. The black-and-white picture doesn't show it, but actually the lower surfaces of all the crown leaves are red or blotched with red.

pyrethrum-rotenone mixtures whereas these mixtures were never found effective in carefully controlled experiments. Stretched to the limit, it could mean that most of the plants in trade carried mite which would eventually multiply and destroy the plants. This could result in a general feeling that African Violets are hard to raise. And such a feeling certainly exists. How many people have you heard say, "I just can't grow violets. For three successive winters I had a nice plant but when warm weather came it died." Warm weather does favor mite growth. Maybe the "May-Flop" is only cyclamen mite: the one plant grower would not recognize the mite damage and would regard the death of the plant merely as indication of her inability to make it grow. If this is true then the African Violet should be in for a great up-surge in popularity. Many commercial growers are now using selenate (consult your recent price lists for verification of this) so Mrs. One-Plant may be surprised to find that her blue plant has survived the summer. So next winter she gets a pink and a white. These two survive because they have been selenated free of mite by the grower. She will begin to think she has really learned how to grow violets at last. So she will get a Bi-Color and a Red Head, and start leaf propagations from all five. Soon she will be writing down South and out West for price lists.

While the above is pure conjecture the fact is that the future looks good for commercially grown plants. Meanwhile the situation is not so nice for the ordinary hobbyist who propagates her own plants or secures them from non-selenating growers. It is possible for even the best-intentioned gift or exchange of plants to introduce mite into a collection. The leaf of that beautiful new Little Baby Blue Eyes that your sister in Texas sent you after she had gotten a plant from a pen-pal in Minnesota may have introduced mite into both your collections.

You plant the Little Baby Blue Eyes in vermiculite, get mite on your fingers, and then handle your Heavenly Heather, scattering mite all over it. Two weeks later you give leaves from your Heavenly Heather to three friends, thus infesting their collections. That makes six infested collections and not one of the six persons concerned has any idea she has mite, won't know it for several weeks yet, and won't believe it for a month longer.

I have recently heard of several very fine collections being lost because of mite. Prevalence of mite seems to be definitely on the increase. This is not to be wondered at. It requires the introduction of only one mite-carrying plant to infest a whole collection. Collectors are continually acquiring new plants, the plants generally stand in leaf-to-leaf contact or are tended by the same pair of hands, and an infested plant can not generally be recognized when it is introduced (or it wouldn't be introduced), so it is almost inevitable that an infestation will be wide-spread before it is recognized. Throwing plants away won't cure it as only the visibly bad plants will

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Seedlings - Pro and Con

Regina and Warren Gottshall

Seedlings have opened the field and are rapidly broadening the scope and developing the strains of Saintpaulias. Doubtless we now think we have perfection when we look at some of the varieties on the market. Consider then that this progress has come about chiefly within the past twenty-five to thirty years - from Ionantha and Kewensis thru Blue Boy to Marine and all the others. Imagine then what the next twenty-five years will bring with so many more people devoting their time to the breeding of African Violets.

The duPonts, as an example, while considered by many to be "out of this world", are still lacking one point for perfection - prolific blooming. Continual cross-pollination of this strain will make the duPonts of tomorrow something not imagined today - and perhaps better shippers. The Supremes are now mostly a matter of mutation and are slowly cropping up in many varieties but selective pollination will bring many improvements to this strain. It is our personal opinion at this time that the blooms of Blue Boy Supreme are the loveliest yet produced or born on any variety. We are impressed by their enormous size - judging by today's standards - and their thick velvety texture; but Blue Boy Supreme does not generally make a very symmetrical or attractive plant.

White Lady is claimed by many to be temperamental or a shy bloomer; others consider it the "only" white to date. Regardless of your own individual opinion the entire white field is still open. A few good whites are being developed however. We have seen two distinctly different white seedlings - not yet under propagation. Both have foliage very nearly the shade of that on White Lady but one has rounded and heavily quilted leaves and makes a very symmetrical plant. The other has finely toothed edges and thin smooth foliage closely resembling the species Kewensis. Imagine the field a little broader with the white blossoms over the lovely quilted foliage of Neptune or the dark beauty of Ruffles or Commodore.

Perhaps you are of the opinion that the market is now overflowing with blues but this is chiefly because the predominance of blue is due to that being the natural color of the native plants. White, pink and orchid are the innovations and have been developed partly by mutation but mainly because of sheer determination on the part of the breeders. The blue monopoly will probably hold for many years as this seems to be the color preference not only of the species but of collectors as well. The day will arrive when there is more of a balance between colors and hues. Even the blues - count just how many true blues there actually are and you will be due for a surprise - most of them have definite lavender or purple tones. More true colors will eventually be achieved and the red color will, before so very much longer, be a reality.

Let us consider all these things as being in favor of cross-pollination and the resulting seedlings. Let us also realize that the better the varieties are developed the sooner some of our minor ones now existing, or those closely similar to others, will be in discard. The collector will become more discriminating in his or her choice of purchases as they realize the impossibility of acquiring all and sundry, because of limited window space. On the other hand this space limitation will soon force the opening of an entire new field - barely touched as yet - the field of miniatures. Selective cross-pollinating of the smaller varieties wil achieve a true class of miniatures in a complete range of hues.

Not as a point of digression, but with serious thought, let us count and consider the evils, or at least minor points, evolving from the raising of seedlings. Perhaps better still we should return to the beginning, i.e. pollination. Many of us are seized with the desire at some time to try our hand at this "cross-pollination business" but, do we always exercise good judgment in our choice of subjects by going about it with a definite purpose in mind? Or do we just mess about haphazardly with whatever we happen to have available at the moment this great urge hits us? If the latter, we are apt to expend our time, energy and patience waiting and hoping to develop the "last word" from a mediocre mother and an insignificant father. You probably have a 1000 to 1 chance of success. Your Blue Boy papa blooms will probably turn up on White Lady mama leaves which, in our opinion, will not be much in the way of outstanding achievement.

As before mentioned the best place to start any undertaking is at the beginning - the beginning, in this case, contradictory as it may sound, is in the ultimate goal to be achieved. Decide upon some combination of leaf and bloom you want to produce, or even a bloom not yet achieved or dreamed of by anyone else - two colored bicolors, for instance, instead of two toned bicolors; or clematis flowered; or a plicata. Saintpaulias are not violets so we need not feel we are violating any Divine rule by endeavoring to develop a radically different type of bloom. Then with this aim in view map out a program, a plan to be followed. The program may be entirely wrong but we will at least know where we are going. We may not make it on our first cross, or our second, or ever, for that

matter, but we are bound to develop that continual reaching-out that will bring some reward eventually. Let us say that we want a white bloom on Blue Girl foliage - we cross the White Lady onto the Blue Girl - perhaps we make it, perhaps we do not - if we do the leaf pattern may not be exactly like the one we want, though some of the characteristics we do want may be present. Then we recross the nearest seedling to our goal onto the Blue Girl again, two or three times if necessary, but with persistence we may win out in the end and have contributed something to the Saintpaulia variety list. (The leaf does not designate the sex of plant so there is no compulsion to adhere to the "Girl" name even though a precedent has been set)

In the meantime our "mistakes" are cluttering our homes and crowding our shelves. The problem of what to do with them is not for us to say. Perhaps the kindest thing for us to do, for the benefit of all other collectors, would be to relegate them to the compost heap; unless - collectors can be educated to accept seedlings as seedlings and not named varieties. Can we school ourselves to say, when we see something different, "Has that a name?" instead of "What variety is that?" In practically all other species of plants many people are content with seedlings for their own beauty alone and not because of the lovely sounding names they have. As an instance, thousands of Hemerocallis seedlings are sold annually without the purchaser sitting down immediately and giving them names of Sally's Puce or Schliefenheimer's Pomegranate.

The result of our many crosses may be one plant with totally radical leaf or bloom and nothing else to go with it to make for perfection. It is no sin to branch out then, while keeping to our original goal, for a one track mind is a sorry thing indeed. Imagine another good bloom on your lovely new foliage and get to work. You may make it eventually but at least you will have discovered that the good, new Saintpaulias are not achieved overnight or without painstaking effort.

Neither should we judge our new seedlings by their first blooms. To cite an instance, Miss Mary Wilcox, that veteran in the field of hand-pollinated seeds and the originator of some of our best seedlings to date, once wrote that she had one plant of which every first bloom bore a pure white stripe down the center of each lobe. Anyone less careful than Miss Wilcox would have immediately proclaimed a new variety but that lady waited for the second blooming only to find that the white stripe had disappeared completely. The hue or tone of your first bloom may not be the same as that of the second and subsequent blooms, or exposure or weather conditions may make a variation. Should this be the case the most constant tone should be given in descriptions. Blue Girl does not always bear the same shade of blue but may vary with the seasons or other conditions from a light blue to a rather dark shade. The fact remains that it is still Blue Girl. A real Light Blue Girl will bear through most of the conditions light blue blooms.

With these ideas in mind, let us set about our task of developing more and better Saintpaulia varieties.

THE UNPREDICTABLE AFRICAN VIOLET LEAF

Martha E. Husted

Upon opening my mail one frosty November morning, I found to my surprise two African Violet leaves. They had come all the way from Denver, Colorado in a letter sent regular mail, not for me to propagate, but to compare with another plant.

Needless to say, they were sad looking, very cold, almost black and flat as a flower pressed many years in a book. The stems were dry and flat like the leaves, but neither leaves nor stems were broken.

One leaf had been a lovely specimen, a Girl leaf from a seedling. My first thought was to try to save it.

After making a fresh cut on the stem, I placed the leaf in a saucer of cold water, completely submerging the entire leaf and stem. After soaking up water all day they had regained an almost normal color and plumpness. That night I crossed my fingers and placed my leaves in my home made propagating box containing vermiculite.

On December 23, I lifted both leaves with large clumps of roots and little plants starting. Those small plants should be peeping through the soil any day now. Their progress has been followed by several growers here in Washington with great interest.

I do not recommend mailing leaves this way but I do hope my experience will be of some help in saving leaves which have suffered from the cold.

CINCINNATI CONVENTION ! !
APRIL 29 and 30.

African Violets, Many new varieties now available, Amazons, Old Lace and others. Write for price list.

MRS. T. C. BEE

RT. No. 3 Newnan, Ga.

On the Trail of the African Violet in British Columbia

Mrs. Ada Muir,

Having been a grower of exibition chrysanthemums for a number of years, cradling upwards of 500 each year from the cutting stage to the nine or ten inch pot, I decided that either old age or laziness were catching up with me, and I wanted something easier.

I found solace in the growing of the begonia, then tried gloxinia bulbs and at the same time was intrigued by accounts of the African Violets which appeared in horticultural journals.

There were no advertisements of plants, leaves or seed at that time in Canadian magazines, so I sent to the United States for leaves. When these leaves arrived they had brown spots on them which the sender afterwards explained were from sprinkling them with water as it was very hot weather. The brown spots spread and the leaves died without producing root.

Then I received a price list of indoor plants from Eastern Canada. Any ordered would be sent postage free but fifteen cents must be added for packing. Four different African Violet plants were listed, so I sent for one of each and added the fifteen cents. They were mailed on November 1st and reached me on November 11th. The parcel might have contained a bit of haberdashery from its appearance. The outer wrapper of brown paper was second or third hand, if not older, and each plant was wrapped in paper that had once encased a loaf of bread.

There was no soil on the roots, but they were wrapped in moss that might have been damp 11 days previously and the roots were dried out. Leaves were quite yellow but I planted them hoping for t he best. The Ionantha was the last to give up and it was quite dead in a week.

By this time I was a very interested member of an African Violet Round Robin and hadn't any excuse for being there, so in order that my membership might be in good standing, I decided to buy plants in local stores or greenhouses if possible. There were none to be had, and I was informed that the owner of the largest greenhouses had filled one of them with African Violets to have them in bloom for Mother's Day and he had thrown 75% out, as there was no demand. Other greenhouse men said they hadn't space to set apart for the African Violet, as it did not harmonize with plants for which there was a certain demand. It was too temperamental.

Then I bought seeds from two advertisers in the United States and a member of a Begonia Round Robin sent some that she had grown. That was in January this year, so, believing that I could maintain heat and moisture necessary, even so early in the year, I planted them and some gloxinia and begonia seeds. The little plants were up beyond the magnifying glass stage and in germination there was nothing to choose between the expensive, the lower priced and the gift seeds.

I watched them day after day, had removed the coverings from the pots then was stricken with influenza which was epidemic here. When I was able to get to the seed pans there was not a plant left as they had dried out owing to the intense furnace heat and lack of moisture.

Weakened with illness, I was in no mood for a new commencement and then one day noticed an advertisement of African Violets by the hundred in a Trade Florist Magazine (Canadian). I wrote and ordered 100, either C.O.D. or would remit on receipt of invoice. A very friendly letter came in reply, dictated by the head of the firm who was in a hospital bed. He gave directions for a potting soil and thought I should try 50 plants first as parcel post was a very risky method of sending nursery stock.

I replied that I wanted 100 and they could either send them air mail or express to the nearest express office which was then 25 miles distant. I enclosed an open check which I thought would be sufficient to cover the 8% tax demanded by the Government and shipping charges.

On August 18th, exactly four months from the time I ordered them a very crumpled carton arrived, marked airmail, but it had been sent parcel post instead, probably owing to the cost, as only 90¢ had been paid for transit.

The carton measured 12" by 7" by 6" and placed in the bottom was a board ½ inch smaller than the area of the bottom. On this board had been placed 18 cardboard plant bands, 2 inches deep and 2½ inches in diameter. The plant bands had held five or six plants and evidently then filled with silver sand.

Could anything but a child mind imagine that those little plant bands were going to remain at the bottom of a carton six inches deep without anchorage of any kind for a 3,000 mile journey? I doubt they would have made it if carried all the way by hand. They didn't! Only six were in place and the rest were a jumbled pile of silver sand, African Violet leaves, dead roots and broken plant bands. All were piled at one end of the carton as there was a gaping hole at the other end. Parcel post officials evidently don't believe in

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On the Trail of the African Violet in British Columbia

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signs, for there were plenty on the top of the carton, and it arrived here on its side.

There was one plant only that had not lost its leaves but, as in many of the others, there was a little green crown showing. I planted them, trying to blow off the silver sand but it was still too damp. In a few days it appeared as if ten might survive so I wrote the firm telling of the condition in which the parcel arrived. In reply they wrote that they were sending more by air express immediately.

The plants arrived on the same day as the letter, August 27th and this time they were in a grape basket, wrapped in sixes in wax paper, smothered in silver sand but with the propagation leaves attached. I tried to get rid of the sand, but it was too damp to move.

At the time of writing, just one month from the day I received the plants, there are 42 that have not died of crown rot. If I had a similar experience again, I would wash out the sand with warm water, but I was afraid to when these arrived. Collecting here in Canada definitely is not fun but when you pass 21 years of age, as I have, you learn to persevere in the fight for what you want.

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HARMON NURSERY

North St. Prospect, Ohio

COMBATING DISEASE

Iva Woods

Sturdy Saintpaulias demand clean places to grow. And in order to avoid disastrous diseases from invading "growing" benches, a constant program to combat all enemies is being used by commercial growers. The following data was gathered recently from a written survey.

In all cases, the necessity of sterile pots, soil and benches before each crop of Saintpaulias was considered the initial step. Then, as an added prevention a spray program is maintained. The more dreaded pests are mealy bug, thrip and the mite. In most greenhouses, leaf cuttings receive their first treatment as soon as rooted and this spraying is continued at intervals of either one week, ten days, or two weeks (according to instructions) for the time the plants remain in the greenhouse.

Some growers advocate 1 teaspoon of Volck and ¼ teaspoon of Black Leaf 40 to one quart of tepid water. This will control mealy bugs and thrip. It is important that the spray be directed down into the crown of each plant, so that the compact growth that usually affords a breeding place is completely sprinkled. This may be used on both plants and rooted leaf cuttings at 10 day or 2 week intervals.

Liquid Nicotine (1 part to 200 parts water or 1 teaspoon to 1 quart) used as a spray will control pests, even including mites. Plants should be sprayed every two weeks, regardless of size.

N.N.O.R. (one-half to a teaspoon to one quart of tepid water) sprayed on all age plants every two weeks, carefully giving the crowns a good treatment, is also an excellent preventative.

Another good product is OPTOX, using three-fourths teaspoon to one quart of water. It is used as a spray and regular dates are adhered to.

And since the introduction of Sodium Selenate into the treatment program, many growers are using it regularly for watering into the soil. Tho' it, like all poisonous solutions, must be used with precaution!

It would be well for us "amateurs" to profit by these experiences of recognized growers. And for us to remember that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". But too, we shall have to experiment in the sense of finding our own favorite formula and method that will best suit our growing conditions.

A Timely Warning, Overwatering?

Harriet Lawton

As Spring approaches many of us will be thinking of giving our plants a breathing spell, possibly setting them on the porch where they will have plenty of fresh air after the long winter in the house. And, I mean literally a "breathing" spell! This is probably more true of the Northern States or colder climates rather than the Southern ones where fresh air may circulate freely throughout the year and where little is experienced by these growers because of lack of humidity due to furnace heat. This is one of our biggest problems, (lack of humidity) in steam heated houses, for without moisture in the air, most plants have slim chances of survival. In taking up the matter of "watering", I would like to mention several types of watering, giving some of the pros and cons of each.

1. Watering by Constant Water-Level: An article appeared in the last issue of this magazine giving this type of watering. I am wondering how many of our readers gave it a try. I would like to caution those who are using this to use extreme care when plants are transferred from the dry air of the steam heated house to the open porch. Out of doors the plants absorb a certain amount of moisture through both the leaves and the walls of the porous pots; hence, less water is required through the medium of capillary watering. If the pots have been "sunk in sand" indoors, the chances are that merely resting the pots on the sand when transferred to the porch may be sufficient . . . Or, in the case of a prolonged damp spell, water may be with-held for several days. The main thing is to keep the soil ball damp only. (not wet.) If small pots are used, one may find it necessary to have them more than 1 inch above the water-level. Many plants in a given area tend to increase humidity and therefore less water will be needed. Also, the size and condition of plant will make a difference as to the amount of water consumed in a given time. Never water an ailing plant in this way! !

a. Peat moss? Should one incorporate peat moss in the potting mixture? Some peat moss is usually needed in the potting mixture. The amount of peat depends largely on the type of soil used. If one has heavy soil, peat is needed to break it up and make it more porous so that the fine roots will penetrate it more readily. Use less peat with a sandy loam as water travels more rapidly through this type of soil than it does through a heavy soil. Mine is a sandy loam put up by a local nurseryman with cow manure, bone meal and any other enriching they may put in it. To 2 parts of this I add ½ part of peat and ½ part of course sand. Peat holds many times its weight in water and therefore is invaluable for holding moisture during winter months when furnace heat is on and particularly when plants are watered from the saucer. It also has great value in making the soil porous and so permitting the air to reach the root system and prevents the soil from caking. It is most important in plant care that sufficient oxygen reaches the root system.

2. Wick watered plants: This is also a form of capillary watering. Practically the same holds true as with constant water-level watering. Here again you may use the same soil mixture including the peat. Wicks can be used with either glazed or porous pots. More care must be taken however not to overwater if glazed pots are used. In both cases, allow to dry out occasionally, letting the reservoir remain empty a day or so before refilling. It takes more time to "dry out" the soil in a glazed pot if overwatered whereas with the porous pot, much moisture is lost to the air through the walls of the pot. So, one must use their judgment as conditions vary. The amount of sunny weather, cloudy or damp spells and whether or not a plant is in active growth or resting, all make a difference as to the amount of water consumed in a given time.

3. Plants watered from saucer: This is in a manner, a kind of capillary watering. It is most important to have peat in this potting mixture as the plant is not drawing constantly on a regular supply of water. However, do not have water standing constantly in saucer. Water with warm water from the saucer and allow the plant to remain until the top soil begins to show moisture. Then, throw the excess water out and water again only when the top soil begins to feel dry to the touch. It may be necessary to have more peat with plants watered in this way especially during the winter months.

I would like to mention difficulties which are apt to crop up from over watering and you will note from illustrations just what to look for in making this diagnosis.

Over a year ago I was obliged to leave my plants to the care of another during a three week vacation. At that time, capillary watering was somewhat new to me. When I left, the plants were beginning to bloom and had many buds. Glowing accounts were sent me while away of the condition of my plants, but alas, upon my return what greeted me ! ! The crowns of my largest plants were nearly gone; not like a crown rot for all the large leaves and main stem were firm. (there was no wilting.) But, the tiny leaves about the center of the crown turned to a sickly green or yellow and some of them a grey. (these last were dead.) I pulled some out with

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Stems on some plants become twisted and cease growing. Note the way leaves lie flat and on top of one another.

Leaves of center plant gone. Plant throwing out suckers on the side of main stem.

Note the distorted leaves, also the new crown forming.

A Timely Warning - .. ... Overwatering

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tweezers to give the new growth a chance. And, some of the leaves in the center appeared quite hairy and some twisted and misshapen. Consulting a local greenhouse, I was told it was the cyclamen mite and promptly gave them the hot water bath. That was a year and a half ago.

This fall I experienced the same thing but was on the spot myself, however, and recognizing it early in the game, was determined to trace it down. After consulting one or two authorities, I suspected overwatering as the cause. It was too late to catch some of my largest plants as the center crowns were pretty far gone. Some of the others however, large and small were caught in the early stages and have responded to treatment. If one suspects overwatering, remove plant at once to a saucer where it can be watered individually and kept a bit on the dry side until nursed back to health when it can be returned to its former type of watering but this time watered with caution ! ! In a case such as the above, one must pick out the affected leaves from the center crown with tweezers but with great care. If the very center bud head has not been destroyed, the plant will form a new crown in the same place. But, if the original bud head has been destroyed, suckers will grow out from the sides of the main stem but the plant will never be as shapely as it was before. If one has sentiment about the plant and it is extra choice, these suckers can be cut off and rooted. If one keeps the Saintpaulia as a hobby and has a lot of time, these plants can be nursed back to health. If raising Saintpaulias is mainly a hobby, there is a satisfaction in doing it. On the other hand, if one is selling plants, they begrudge the space an ailing plant takes up and the time it takes to bring it back. With this particular trouble, there is no danger of keeping these plants next to others as there would be with mites and mealy bugs. But, first make sure that the trouble is overwatering. Do not confuse it with either the mite or stunt as the symptoms appear quite the same. The above diagnosis was confirmed by our State Experiment Station. Also, a plant was sent to the U. S. Station at Beltsville, Maryland and the report was returned, "Overwatering. No evidence of mite".

It has been said that African Violets, unlike most other house plants, do better if overpotted. This may be true when watered from the saucer with plant in a porous pot. If these get too wet they can easily be dried out. It is however so easy to get plants too wet in too large a pot ! ! The earth ball should be kept damp but not wet. In caring for plants, keen observation is necessary from day to day. It's a case of "a stitch in time saves nine". Catch any plant ailments at the start. It is easier to prevent trouble than to cure it if it once gets started. So, be alert to your plants' requirements and catch any before they gain headway.

Mite, Water Bath, and Selenate

continued from page 27

be discarded, others, less far advanced but infested nevertheless, will only serve to spread the mite further. Killing all the mites is the only real solution.

Of course, as more and more plants purchased from selenating growers find their way into collections losses will be smaller. But most collections consist of a few purchased plants and many home propagated plants, propagated either by the collector herself or her friends (that is one of the fascinations of the hobby). The home propagated plants at present have no protection and are quickly overwhelmed by the mite when ill-luck introduces it.

I am somewhat apprehensive that certain commercial growers are either careless in their application of selenate or are using excessive quantities as some plants I have purchased this past summer have shown the leaf distortion which I now associate with over-selenation. I have not seen leaf distortion in normally treated plants, but have seen it in over-selenated ones. If leaf distortion, this is characteristic of over-selenation, then plants showing it reflect bad greenhouse practice that careful purchasers will not long tolerate.

Eventually a better anti-mite material will probably be developed. It is difficult to imagine one more effective or simpler to use. Elimination of bad effects on plants of any age and substitution of a non-poisonous material are much to be desired. But, until such a substance is made available, let's give Dr. Blauvelt the credit he deserves for devising the method for eliminating the worst enemy the African Violet has had to date.

Automatic watering for your African Violets. Send 45¢ for one Glaswik, holder, saucer and instructions. 3 for $1.25 postpaid. Use your own pot. System recommended by Dr Post of Cornell. Remarkable results.

ATLAS ASBESTOS COMPANY
Box AV North Wales, Pa.

Dear Saintpaulia Admirers, Feasterville, Penn. February 28, 1949.

Recently, I have been exceeding my alloted page space and in an endeavor to be concise I shall fall into line at once. This is the opportunity I have been awaiting, to publicly thank Helen Van Pelt Wilson for the enthusiasm created in both our Society and Homing Pigeon Department by her enjoyable Women's Day article (Nov. issue). It, I know, has greatly increased our enrollment of members. Sooooo, to our newcomers - "Welcome to our covey"!

Next is a word of warning. As I have had the pleasure of reading Introductory letters, I note there are but few people whose families consist of neither children nor pets. Therefore, when Gene Bowman wrote that their family cat and dog ate violet blooms and leaves respectively, it gave me considerable worriment. And while I have cautioned him on allowing them to continue, I also want to inform the public of the danger, too. Today, practically all of our Saintpaulias are treated with insecticides to act as a preventative to disease and pests. Sodium Selenate is commonly used to immune plants to many insects, but I wonder if we all realize it is poisonous and these treated plants should be kept out of reach of little hands and inquisitive tongues. . .

Topic #2: Many garden clubs are introducing the African Violet hobby into hospitals. Dalene Rhodes has been periodically donating to tubercular patients; in addition there are many other staunch contributors - two of whom I wish to go into detail about: Browns' & Sons of Newman, Ga. and Harvey Cox of Long Beach, Calif. Recently I received an unsolicited letter from Mrs. Robt. Brown suggesting a similar plan and one that could be adopted by our Homing Pigeon Dept. with the reciprocants being hospitalized veterans. Soon afterwards, I received a letter from Mr. Cox along the same channel informing me of his efforts. And thus, we have willing workers - why not organize?

First, we are in need of a name for this club, which we shall sponsor. I am perfectly willing to consider suggestive titles, tho' I do believe an appropriate one to be the "HARVEY - BROWN CLUB" in as much as these are the ones responsible for our organizing. A committee will be appointed and periodically reports will be included in our Magazine - that is, if our readers are behind us and give the necessary support!

We desire names of Veteran Hospitals conveniently located to Pigeon members and trust the latter will render aid. Contribution of plants by generous commercial growers, clubs and individuals will be graciously accepted. And gifts of violet books, subscriptions to flower magazines

and membership in our Society will supply the boys with reference material. Therefore, please consider this letter as an "SOS" and I shall gladly receive any data pertaining to our project.

Now, for a quick flash for our Canadian friends - many of whom will be delighted to learn that Mrs. C. A. Ray (Glenburnie Rd.) and Mrs. B. J. Ewens (Box 101) both of Port Credit, Ontario are partners in selling and shipping 46 named varieties of our most popular house plant. I extend my best wishes to both the growers and their customers.

In conclusion, may I also inform you that Mrs. Carl Olson of West Grove, Pa. is offering a "holder" suitable for our Society booklet; made of plywood and neatly trimmed. It retails for $2.50 and I offer the report in reply to your inquiries. My method may not be as attractive to the eye, but also answers the purpose. I use a standard size, three-hole note book. And, as I receive the quarterly I open it to the middle, carefully remove the staples, divide the magazine into two sections allowing me to punch three spaced holes. Then, I compile the pages again, insert the staples and have my magazine in the same condition as upon its receipt. If you have "suggestions", won't you share them, too?

Trusting that we may all meet at our Cincinnati Convention, I remain -

Sincerely yours,
ELSIE CROASDALE FREED
(Conductress)

African Violets

INTRODUCING - 6 New Double Flowering Varieties on our 1949 Catalogue, now ready.

Also featuring new Supremes and other choice varieties. Send for free catalog.

HYPONEX plant food - clean, odorless, safe to use weekly for violets. 7 oz. 50¢ 1 lb. $1.00 P.Pd.
OPTOX - Safe, effective insecticide to control mealy bug and cyclamen mite on saintpaulia. 1 oz. 60¢ 7 oz. $1.35 1 pt. $2.50.

TINARI'S CERTIFIED VIOLET SOIL - This soil has been treated to control nematodes, and harmful soil fungus, 3 lb. $1.00 5 lb. $1.50. please add 25¢ west of Miss.

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EXCELLENT POTTING SOIL — A specialist's formula of woods soil, leafmold, sand, rotted manure, charcoal, hardwood ashes and superphosphate, sterilized — 3 lbs. for $1.00 P. P.

MRS. LOUISE TRIBBLE
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Some new varieties now ready for shipping
Send stamped addressed envelope for list.

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ATLANTA, GEORGIA

AFRICAN VIOLETS!
Visit Peterson's Greenhouses
While in Cincinnati
3132 McHenry Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio.

Collecting Then and Now

continued from page 10

had cleared the roads and started to get out the car. My husband exclaimed: "You surely aren't going that distance in this weather just to get some violets!"

A friend and I arrived at the Yoars home to be greeted by Mrs. Yoars as she swept out a huge drift and gayly called "I didn't expect you this kind of weather!" and we answered, "You know these violet fans!"

We introduced ourselves and went into her violet house. We stood in awe and amazement. Row after row, hundreds and hundreds of violets in all sizes met our gaze. A riot of color greeted us, from the palest blush to pink and reds, from blues to deep purples, and my friend whispered, "It's a violet factory."

We had a lovely visit. We would say to Mrs. Yoars. "Do you have so and so?" We would all go to one end of the house and look at it, then we would ask for another variety and away we would go to the other end of the house and look at it. Back and forth we went, looking at this one, stopping to chat about the virtues of one variety or other, discussing soils, fertilizers, new varieties, the national convention.

The shadows grew long, the light dimmed and, looking at my watch, I gasped. Five o'clock! Mrs. Yoars hurriedly packed our purchases, we got in the car and waved a reluctant good-bye, promising to come again soon. We slipped and slid over the sixty miles of icy roads, home to an anxious husband and son but perfectly happy, for nestled close to the heater in the back of the car was a box of lovely new African Violets, varieties that I had never owned before.

African Violets

Send for My Free Illustrated 1949 Spring Catalog

It contains complete descriptions of all my varieties, including many of my own introductions. Several varieties are illustrated; catalog is packed with valuable information. Start this delightful hobby this season — write today!

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The African Violet Magazine

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The Editor Says:

Dear Members: Your next magazine will be Volumn 3 Number 1, and it will be mailed out to you about September 1 to 10. Please give your copy time to reach you before notifying the editor you have not received it. The magazine is sent to all members as 3rd class matter . . . 3rd class mail travels more slowly.

As the envelopes for each issue must be addressed a month in advance the Society should have immediate notice of your change of address.

We are most deeply grateful to those of you who wrote in and gave assistance in locating the "lost members". Please look the names over in this issue and let us hear from you. We are most anxious to send them their copies of the magazine.

To mention only a few . . . for the September magazine John M. Good will show in pictures and tell us about his duPont Violets. Rose Hahn has contributed a story in pictures showing attractive containers to display plants in. Members of our regular staff will have their usual fine articles, and there will be many other informative and useful features too.

Do send in those articles and share your successes and failures with your African Violet Society friends.

How wonderful it was to see so many of you in Cincinnati! Don't forget the articles you promised to write . . .

Most Sincere'y,
Alma Wright

ANNOUNCEMENT

Please contact Mr. Floyd L. Johnson, 964 Whittier Road, Spencerport, New York for advertising information.

He is the advertising manager for the African Violet Magazine.

Advertising rates are $3.00 per column inch.

When writing to the members of the magazine staff please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your reply.

The Presidents Message

Membership

The President's message this time is really a message from Mr. Warren E. J. Gottshall, Treasurer of The African Violet Society of America, Incorporated. He wishes to advise:

THAT local organizations are permitted to retain fifty-cents (50¢) of the national African Violet Society of America, Inc. dues for each member of their organization who is also a member of the National Society.

THAT remittance of the $2.50 due the National Society, shall be forwarded by either the Treasurer or Secretary of the local organization.

THAT the retaining of the fifty-cents (50¢) applies to both new memberships and renewals.

THAT memberships in the National Society are only two classes, "Individual" or "Sustaining".

THAT Individual Memberships will be accepted in one name only.

THAT only the person whose name appears on the "membership card" is a member of the Society and only the person so named will be allowed the priviledges of the Convention and Annual Meeting.

THAT memberships applied for in the name of a local organization shall have only one representative and one vote at the Annual Meeting.

THAT the ONLY exception being that Husband or Wife may attend the Convention and Annual Meeting on the Individual Membership Card of the other, Only one shall have voting priviledges.

It was indeed gratifying to see such a fine representation at the Annual Meeting in Cincinnati. Details of the business transacted, and further reports of the splendid program will be in the September issue of the African Violet Magazine.

Cordially,

Your President,

Alma Wright

BRIEF GUIDANCE

Helen Van Pelt Wilson

(Published thru the courtesy of M. Barrows & Co., Inc., publishers of Miss Wilson's revised edition of "African Violets".)

Here then is a ten-point program which, faithfully followed, is known to produce fairly constant bloom on saintpaulias:

1. In winter, place plants preferably at east or north windows. Avoid strong sunlight.

2. In summer, place plants at north windows, kept open for long periods, or on a lightly shaded porch.

3. Maintain a house temperature of seventy to seventy-two degrees with no more than a ten-degree drop at night.

4. Maintain a fresh atmosphere, but in avoiding closeness, be mindful of the dangers of chilling.

5. Water from the saucer with room-temperature water. Apply enough each morning to be absorbed by early afternoon.

6. Make special provisions for humidity if the air in the house is noticeably dry, or if temperatures incline to rise much above seventy degrees. Those who have humidifiers in their homes find that their "violets" benefit as much as they do.

7. To remove dust and stimulate new growth, spray foliage occasionally - - once a week or less, depending on how fast dust collects. A house plant syringe will do the trick. Be sure to use room-temperature water. If water is much colder or warmer than the surrounding air, spotting of foliage may result.

8. Sterilize or fumigate the soil used for saintpaulias. This will keep roots free of nematodes, which is essential health insurance. Sterilize also all pots, saucers, flats, and the plant shelves which come in contact with your saintpaulias. It's those fast-traveling mites you're after now.

9. Decide on the mite deterrent you will use - Optox, N. N. O. R., or other spray, hot water bath, or sodium selenate soil treatment. Notice it is a deterrent we are talking about, not a cure. Treat healthy plants; then you won't have to nurse sick ones.

10. Beware of strangers. Isolate all new plants for two months before introducing them to your treasured collection. In that time you can spot mite and, if necessary, deal with it or discard one plant. Your saintpaulia family will not have been contaminated by the newcomer.

TRANSPLANTING AID

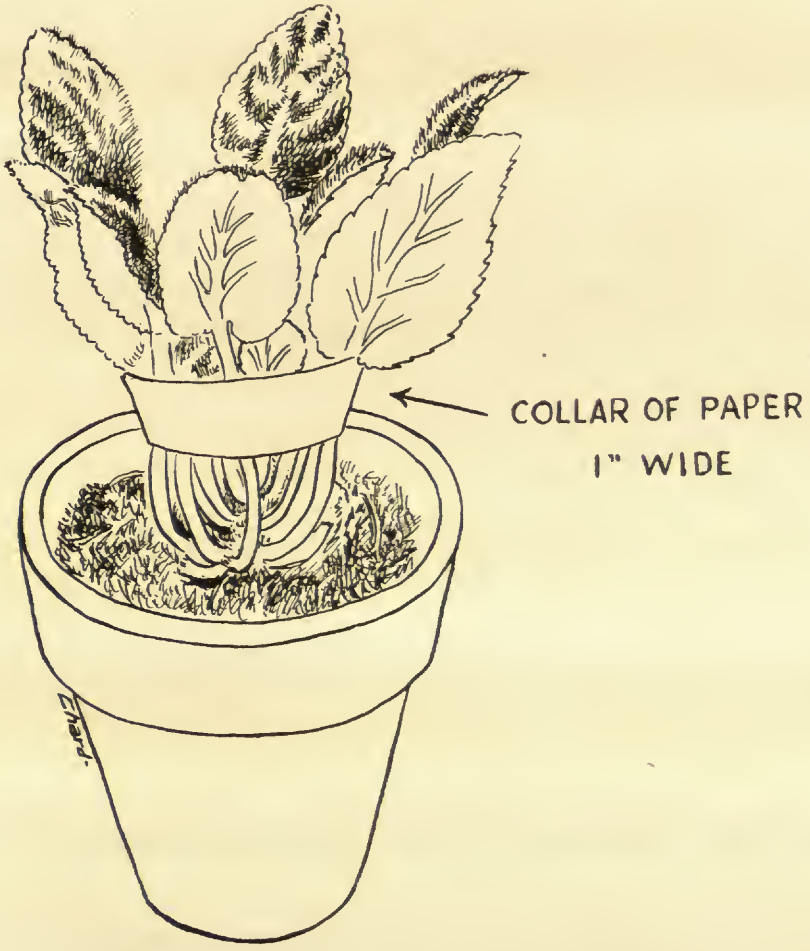
Helen Pochurek

Illustrated by Arthur Chard

One thing I have found to be of help in transplanting plants is to make a little collar of paper (one inch wide) to hold the leaves up, as illustrated below. In this manner, the strain is taken off the plant while it is recovering from the shock of being transplanted.

Lift the leaves up gently, place the paper collar carefully around the petioles, clip, pin, or fasten the ends with Scotch tape.

The collar may be left on for a month or so, depending upon the condition of the plant. When the collar is removed, if the foliage is more upright than you like, the leaves will soon flatten out when the plant is placed in the proper exposure.



THRIPS

(Reported by Regina and Warren Gottshall)

Illustrations by Arthur G. Chard

(We are greatly indebted to the following for their assistance, and acknowledge with appreciation all the information and experiences that made this writing possible:— Dr. Floyd F. Smith and Dr. Freeman Weiss (USDA, Beltsville, Md.), Mr. Evan P. Roberts (School of Agriculture, Michigan State College), Dr. Stanley F. Bailey (University of California), Mrs. Ruth Sillers, Mrs. Annette Scully, Mr. W. D. Holley, the members of Homing Pigeon #4, and those mentioned individually in this report. We are especially indebted to Mr. Arthur G. Chard for all his research and the splendid accompanying illustrations.)

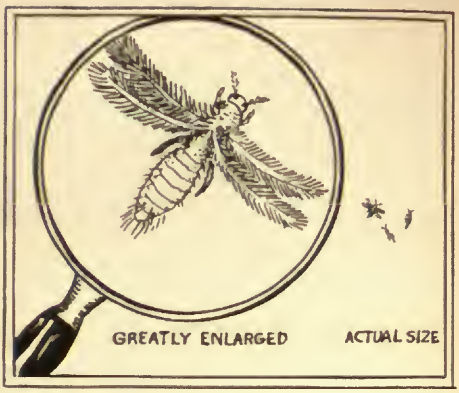
THE INSECT AND ITS EVIDENCE

Saintpaulias would seem to be the special "banquet fare" of some of the most destructive and injurious insects to attack the plant world. Devastation of many plants or whole collections by cyclamen mite, mealy bug, or nematodes is not quite enough to contend with - to these pests we must add THRIPS.

"Thrips is a relatively new insect, noticed first in 1929 in Ohio and Ontario, Canada. Its more than 1600 known species", writes Helen Connell, "has been rapidly distributed throughout North America." The Banded Greenhouse Thrips, Hercinothrips femoralis (belonging to the order Thysanoptera, meaning bristle-wings) would seem to be the most important species for growers and collectors to worry about, for, in addition to Saintpaulias, they are known to attack many greenhouse plants - among them, amaryllis, buddleia, calla, chrysanthemum, gardenia, and begonia. However, the popular varieties of many garden flowers that are cut and brought into our houses are also subject to various thrips and caution should be taken in this direction.

The gladiolus thrips Taeniothrips simplex (distinguished by the white band appearing at the base of the wing bars) can do extreme damage to a gladiolus and the lovely blooms of the hemerocallis. In addition to these, greenhouses are frequent hosts to the onion and tobacco thrips Thrips tabaci. Some species of thrips attack only the foliage of a plant while others prey upon the flowers. They feed on both upper and lower surfaces of leaves; both mature and unfolding; and on flowers and in the bud.

Unlike the cyclamen mite, thrips can be seen quite plainly through a magnifying glass as the winged adults range from 1/20 to 1/8 of an inch in size, appearing something like small aphids or plant lice, but more slender, and usually grey, brown, or black in color (depending upon species), instead of green. They have feather-like



wings (two pair, very slender, having long hairs around their margins), but move mostly by running, which they do very rapidly. Due to their activity, it is frequently rather difficult to keep them in view under a hand glass.

The evidence of thrips on Saintpaulia leaves is seen first in numerous whitish spots, where the juices of the leaf have been sucked out. These spots show in the beginning more plainly on the lower surface. As attack goes on, the spots spread, forming blotches, dead areas appear around the edges of the leaf, the foliage wilts, and finally drops off. Thrips begin their work by scraping the surface so as to break the leaf-cells and exhaust the sap, leaving a dead spot. When these dead spots become sufficiently numerous, the leaf fails to fulfill its function and dies, or becomes only a burden to the plant. The whitish appearance of the injured surface is due to the dead walls of the ruptured cells and the air within and later changes to a "rusty" color as the spot dies. The surface may also be discolored by the small specks of reddish excrement (later turning black) voided by the thrips.

Blooms that have been attacked are characterized by white streaks (especially noticeable on the blue or dark shades, and due to the constant rasping or scraping of the insect as they remove the surface to get at the cell sap) and by premature dropping of buds or flowers (due to the self-pollination of the flower by the action of the thrips) and frequently shortened or distorted petals. It must be emphasized, however, that blooms which occasionally bear white streaks, especially in the autumn of the year, or at a season when there are radical changes in the temperature, need not necessarily be hosts to thrips. Unequal distribution of coloring pigment during these times is merely due to climatic variations. Also, plants that drop flowers or buds prematurely and show none of the other characteristics of thrips infestation may be sufferng from gas, too low humidity, or lack of fresh air. Some sources also claim that an overabundance of nitrogen in the soil can cause premature dropping of blooms; especially immediately after watering. On the other hand, should the other "symptoms" also be present (malformed flowers, premature dropping of blooms and bud, and the white stripes)

it is wise to suspect thrips and take steps immediately to isolate and begin an intensive spraying program.

"A good indication of this insect" writes Mrs. John P. Murray, "is a violet which seems to be dropping its bloom immediately upon opening. If a bloom is pinched off and pulled apart, the little insects can be seen scurrying around right under the 'eye' of the violet. You do not always find the pests in every bloom, so it is well to check several if you are suspicious of the plant."

Several sources attribute infestation to hot, dry atmosphere; at least the development, spread, and multiplication of the insect is definitely more rapid under these conditions. Care should be taken, therefore, to see that proper humidity is attained; which in turn will aid in keeping down the temperature through the process of evaporation; and do not allow the plants to become too dry.

Grass and weeds are a common breeding place for thrips. The larvae hatch in about a week to pale yellow, or milky white, nymphs from kidney-shaped eggs laid in growing plant tissues. Their color changes in later nymphal stages to lemon, or salmon, or orange, with the life-cycle completed by transformation to the dark colored adult in two to four weeks (depending upon the temperature). Immature thrips appear to be smeared with black dried coating or they carry a droplet of black liquid on the back. This material is excretory and is apparently carried as a protection against enemies. After completing their feeding period they spend four or five days in folded young leaves, between plant stems, or between lumps of soil until they transform to adults. It is the young, in the nymphal or pupa stage, that does most of the harm to the plant or bloom, though at both stages they feed upon plant tissues. Some thrips are carnivorous and eat other insects such as mites (but the importation of thrips to combat mite is not recommended by the authors).

"Thrips", Mr. Holley states, "come into the house via new plants primarily. Many propagators do not use sufficient regular control measures so that there are a few of the insects present on the plants which they send out. Once thrips are in the house, there are good conditions for their multiplication and it is an easy matter for them to spread from one plant to another." Plants or flowers brought in from the garden can also be culprits.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Our first bit of personal experience with thrips was furnished by Mrs. Martha Husted when she told us of the variety Myrtle that had been infested from an amaryllis. The leaves of this plant became limp and the markings appeared chiefly upon the undersides of the leaf blades. The whitish nymphs were clearly discernible through a hand glass. As a control she used a warm water dip containing an oil base DDT with disasterous results for the leaves were burned within three hours, apparently from the oil. (This supposition became factual when Dr. Weiss wrote that "the aerosol bombs intended for household insects would probably be hazardous to use on plants because they contain oil solvents that are injurious to plants").

Mrs. Husted's second experience was with the so-called "pollen thrips". (Dr. Smith writes that he has had a rumor of such a thrips attacking Saintpaulias but to date had been unable to obtain specimens to determine whether or not they were a known species). In this case the fallen blooms and buds were noticed to have a small pin-hole in the anther and a flick of the fingernail dislodged the insect and cause it to emerge. In this instance NNOR was used at the rate of ½ teaspoon to the quart of warm water; the plants dipped and the solution then allowed to drop onto the soil. After dipping the plant was placed in the dark for a few days. Not only did this treatment appear to eliminate the thrips but also seemed to be most beneficial to the plant itself. This second attack was traced to gladioli brought into the house.

Floyd Johnson, however, doubts that Saintpaulias are also prey of the gladiolus thrips when he writes, "A planting of between seven and nine thousand bulbs produced not a flower - all on account of thrips. These gladioli were all planted on the east side of the house and the African violets were at open windows on the same side but on the second floor. Not a single violet was affected but every plant large enough to bloom did so. There were also infested glads in the house for a few days." (NOTE - The failure of the gladiolus thrips to attack his violets may have been due to the possibility that thrips cannot fly, or hop, that far or that high. However, their smallness might make them "airborne" in a fairly strong breeze).

Eloise Ellsworth had unknowingly received an infested violet from a source that was known to have thrip infested gloxinias. Failure to isolate this new plant made possible the spread of the insects to her favored duPonts. "I first noticed", she writes, "a rusty strip (similar to the underside of the stem which rubs on the pot) along the petiole close to the crown. Under a magnifying glass I finally saw a black speck move after I had touched it with a toothpick - how it did run!" NNOR was used, but in this case as a spray applied twice at the prescribed intervals and strength and the duPonts isolated. "The 'rusty stuff' has disappeared and the leaves are now beautifully shiny-green."

PREVENTIVES AND CONTROL

In addition to the above mentions of NNOR being an effective combatant of thrips, there have been several other preparations recommended. Mr. Carl Peterson advises Sodium Selenate as a cure and goes on further to state that "if a Sodium Selenate capsule is dissolved in two gallons of water instead of one gallon (as per directions), then it is safer for home use and plants can be watered once a week with this solution, instead of once in three or four weeks." Ethel Crotty has used the Peterson prescription twice a week on a friend's mite infested plants and. she states, they suffered no ill effects and the mites have been eliminated.

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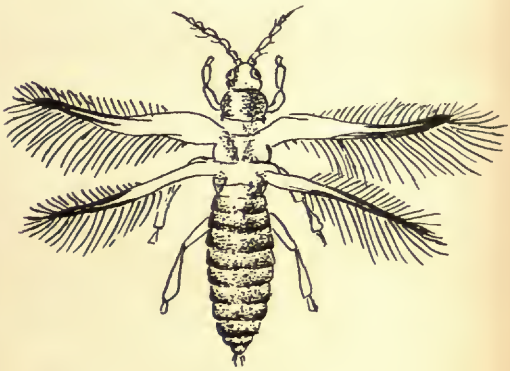

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Another recommendation comes from the Division of Entomology and Parasitology of the University of California when Dr. Bailey writes, "Among the newer insecticides which are very effective against thrips are BHC (Benzine Hexa Chloride) or the phosphates, especially tetraethyl pyro-phosphate. These materials are largely replacing nicotine and pyrethreum which, however, are still effective against this type of pest. Two applications about 10 days apart are usually desired to kill the larvae which hatch out later. Better results are obtained by the use of wet sprays rather than with dusts, especially if the thrips are in the flowers and growing points."

DDT, sprays and powders, have been suggested by Drs. Smith and Weiss and the latter goes on to say that they are effective when used according to the manufacturers' directions for general garden insect control, but repeated and thorough coverage is necessary. Dr. Weiss also offers tobacco dust on the foliage and surface of the ground, or spraying the plants several times at intervals of 5 to 10 days with Black Leaf 40 and soap solution (2 teaspoons of Black Leaf 40 and 1 tablespoon of soap powder to one gallon of water).

"One of the best preventive measures against thrips" advises Dr. Weiss, "is to use fumigated soil for potting plants; chloropicrin, DD, methyl bromide, or other fumigants that destroy all kinds of insect pests. It is possible to carry out some of these soil fumigation treatments at home, using DD (manufactured by the Shell Oil Co., and the Dow Chemical Co.), but one can usually buy treated soil from greenhouse operators at much less expense - certainly with less time and effort."

Parathion (Thio-plus or 3422), "the new wonder insecticide", has the recommendation of both Mr. W. E. Holley and Mr. Evan Roberts. Mr. Holley also informs us that "it is best used as a spray or dip and will control mealybugs and mites as well and is absolutely safe on African violets if directions are followed." Mr. Roberts suggests the "use of 1 teaspoon 25% wettable parathion to one gallon of warm water" and that the precautions on the container be followed.

(CAUTION - Word lately received is to the effect that Parathion is extremely poisonous, comparable to sodium selenate or nicotine sulfate, and that care should be taken not to breathe the fumes or dust, and additional care should be taken to avoid getting the material on the skin. Until complete tests are made on this product, it is not generally recommended for amateur use, or home use - especially in the kitchen (unless there is a good kitchen fan to take off the fumes and even then a mask should be used). In the greenhouse it may be used, if a mask is used as a precaution against inhaling the fumes. Outdoors it should be sprayed "with the wind" so that the residue is carried away from the persons doing the spraying. It is further suggested that about ⅛ ounce of Parathion 15% per gallon of warm water be used on only a few plants to determine their tolerance to this material and to insure proper mixing of the parathion and water. If used as a dip a few minutes immersion should be all that is necessary. The general precautions, usual to other poisons, should be exercised. Keep out of reach of children or animals.)

(KEY to the illustrations)

A. Eggs of the Thrips

B. 1. First stage larva (actual color white with red eyes)
   2. Second stage larva
   3. Third stage or prepupa (color orange)
   4. True pupa with wing pads

C. Adult Thrips - Euthrips tricti

D. Adult Thrips showing fringed wings

E. Thrips injury to African violet blossom (marked)

F. Thrips injury to African violet leaf (marked)

Aside from the above it is suggested that, if thrips are present, pinching off all the buds and blooms will destroy a lot of the insects. This is rather a heartbreaking and drastic action (especially if we have been waiting for months for the plant to come into flower) but it would be a good means of getting rid of the thrips hidden in the folded buds if a thorough dipping is not practiced.

Optox has been used according to directions by Mrs. Murray who sprayed every three days for a period of six weeks. However, at the end of that time she was still finding an "occasional bug". In desperation her "kill or cure" method was to prepare a pail of lukewarm Optox solution and submerge pot, plant and all for about a minute or two. For awhile it was a touch-and-go proposition (the solution may have been too strong for the roots), but the plants snapped out of it and came into bloom with no sign of thrips.

Whatever method is used, it must be remembered to use it thoroughly and consistently. A mere pump of the spray or light powdering of the dust is not sufficient. Neither should the top of the soil be neglected if one wants to eliminate the nymphs there. Dr. Weiss sums it up very nicely when he states that "one of the best safeguards against thrip trouble in violets is to use only treated soil for potting plants; being careful in selecting new plants and then isolating them before adding them to one's collection; in short, prevention is worth a lot more than cure."

SEASONAL CARE FOR SAINTPAULIAS

Regina and Warren Gottshall

Proper care of the African violet does not necessitate an involved or complicated program. Neither are they untouchables or special pets to be pampered and shielded. On the other hand the mere purchasing, watering, and feeding is not quite sufficient. Saintpaulias are plants and as such are subjected to certain laws of Nature. Not being a humdrum affair of sameness, Nature is constantly changing into four Seasons. These various Seasons demand a special task of all growing things. African violets, having as their original habitat a temporate or sub-tropic zone, are not subjected to radical Seasonal changes; nor are they adaptable to them. They are, therefore, by Nature, not perennials hardy to extremes of temperature. The fact that their popular appeal has transplanted them into a climate not their own and into the unnatural conditions of our homes, necessitates slight variations in their care. Let us then take them through the year's cycle, beginning with the Season of horticultural birth or rebirth.

SPRING CARE

This is the Season claimed by some to be the trickiest of the four - others have their difficulties during Winter. Summer and Fall also draw complaints. One is no more difficult than the other, once you understand their particular conditions that must be counteracted, or alleviated, and heed this understanding. Spring is the Season for rot to play havoc with some collections. Why? Rot is a deterioration and decay of growth tissues brought about by an over-abundance of the most necessary compound - water. Thus a necessity can also become an evil.

Our furnaces are suddenly shut off and the windows thrown open to admit a surge of fresh air. Spring rains naturally burden the air by increasing its moisture content, and evaporation diminishes with the rise in humidity. It is only a natural conclusion that when evaporation is cut down, its replacement, via the watering can or hose, is not required as frequently, or in as large amounts. A plant's absorption of water from the soil is nominal to that lost by evaporation. So with the advent of Spring, we must get over our Winter's habit of Monday-Wednesday-Friday waterings, the tablespoonful every day, or whatever our personal habit may have been. Water should be applied sparingly for a few weeks; at least until the plants become adjusted to the change in atmosphere.

It is usually as simple as that. On the other hand, the soil should not be allowed to become excessively dry at any time, as this condition will cause a drooping of the leaves. If caught in time, this lack of water need not be fatal to the plant. However, when the plant again becomes turgid with water the weight of the leaves may prevent their reaching their normal upright or right-angle position natural to their variety, and an unnatural drooping results - in the older leaves at least. These leaves may then rot where they come into contact with the moisture exuding lip of the pot, unless braced, or the rim dipped into paraffin or covered with aluminum foil. Some soil mixtures that have been allowed to become excessively dry may never get wet to the surface when placed in water. Should this occur, water should be added at the top of the pot, for then the action of evaporation will draw water into the soil.

At any Season, it is generally advisable to thoroughly moisten the soil at least once a week (unless the proper moisture content of the soil can be kept at all times), but they should not be kept soaking; the pot should then be allowed to drain off all excess moisture. This draining process sucks air back into the soil just as the complete saturation has forced much of it out. Air is a must and one of the prime factors why many people add vermiculite to their potting soil is that this product acts as a storage reservoir for air and water.

Complete and occasional saturation of the soil is not necessary for growth of the plant, but it has its compensations. Plant roots naturally need water. If only the bottom half of a potful of soil is moistened the roots will find it, but then the roots spread out where this moisture is available. At the top of the pot there are none, and we then wonder why our plants become wobbly and subject to snapping off from a careless jolt or touch. It is merely because there are no roots near the surface of the soil to securely anchor the plant. If you insist in watering only half of your soil, it is far more advisable to apply this water from the top, so that a foothold can be developed. However, this is applicable to all four Seasons, and it is Spring we are considering.

Our main concern with this Season is not to over-water. Another thing to be taken into consideration is the increase in warmth and brilliance of the Sun. Plants that did beautifully during the Winter in a Southern exposure will now begin to need some protection - curtains of any sort that will temper the Sun's rays must be used - or the foliage will take on a bleached, yellowed complexion. Spring merely demands a temporary decrease in water, protection from the Sun, and a rehabilitation program where necessary.

Most of our plants that have been established for a year or more will have exhausted the food supply of the soil. (If they have been fed regularly on a commercial fertilizer, there may be an excessive accumulation of "salts" in the soil. These salts usually leech out at the top of the soil or lip of the pot and should be removed.) These plants should now be

repotted or shifted. Shifting is by far the simplest, as it calls only for a thorough moistening of the soil to hold it together. The plant with its ball of earth is then pushed from the pot and moved to the next larger size pot and fresh soil added to fill up the space. This method causes a minimum of disturbance to the roots. Repotting calls for the removal of some of the soil from the top and about the sides; probably a trimming of roots and the removal of a few leaves to balance the shortened root system. The plant can then be repotted into the same sized pot or the next larger size. (When using fertilizers, it must be remembered never to add them in quantities large enough to burn the roots. Small applications at regular intervals during the growing season are advisable.)

Propagation by leaf or offset is usually more rapid and prolific at this time of the year - unless the plants are grown in the controlled conditions of a greenhouse. Pollination may be effective at any time during the year, but seed will be found to ripen in a much shorter time if they have been fertilized during the Spring. Propagation and pollination are mentioned here, because they are indirectly involved in th care of Saintpaulias, i.e. care by perpetuation, as a few varieties do not improve with age, but rather seem to deteriorate and should be replaced.

SUMMER CARE

The days are lengthened into Summer by an increase in the intensity of light and the rise in temperature. Light increases may now be diffused in all directions, except North, by the maturity of the foliage on protective trees or shrubbery. If not, the protection supplied in the Spring must be kept in use. The rising temperature will increase the evaporation from the soil. The watering program must now be stepped up and if we live in a particularly arid section, the humidity must be increased. Saintpaulias cannot tolerate temperatures much below 40 degrees or above 80 degrees, and the best way to lower the temperature about our plants during the hot Summer months is by the cooling effects derived from evaporation. Evaporation and an increase in humidity may be accomplished by several methods. Placing of containers of water among the plants is one way, and this may be improved upon by using sponges in shallow containers of water. The sponges increase the surface space from which evaporation becomes possible. Another way is to set the pots on sand or vermiculite, whether we use individual containers or trays. It using the latter method, be sure that the bases of the pots do not stand in water, except when the plants are to be watered. (A very good set-up is explained in the Vol. 2 No. 2 issue of this magazine under the title "Watering by the Constant Water-Level", and again in Vol. 2 No. 3.)

African violets may be at the end of their blooming span at this time of year, but whenever this condition arises, the feeding of extra nutriments should be withheld until new growth and/or the reforming of buds has begun. Plants that have been shifted or repotted in the Spring will by now be taking on new life. These should be fed regularly unless a complete fertilizer was incorporated in the soil used at that time. For Summer, increase your moisture and humidity, decrease the direct rays of the Sun, and feed only growing plants.

FALL CARE

Autumn begins the decline of the cycle, but the decrease in light intensity still does not permit our becoming careless with our exposure protections. This Season of the year is also occasioned by cooler spells, and the watering must again be less frequent. Cutting down on the water will also help to acclimate the plants to the dry conditions of our heated homes.

This season may also demand that we initiate a definite spraying program, if we have not kept one prior to this time. Perhaps our plants now take on signs of disease which we are unable to understand, as they have not been moved from their accustomed places; nor have plants from unknown sources been added. Plants can be infested, particularly during the Seasons when our windows and doors are open, as many of the insects that attack African violets can be airborne. Mite can be brought in from our gardens on our hands or blown there by the breeze. Thrip can fly the space between our onion patch or Hemerocallis plantings, or even be carried by a circulation of air, as they are so small. Our delphinium brought into the house may be the culprit. Whatever the cause, or lack of it, a regular spraying procedure is a wise precaution, if not a necessary one.

Leaves potted in the Spring should have had their plantlets separated and individually repotted in the Summer months; if not, we should put this chore off no longer. Our pots should be washed off, the containers cleaned and sterilized, and the bad or unattractive foliage removed in preparation for Winter. Forethought and preparation should also be made for the correcting of Winter conditions when they arrive. Guard against chilling drafts and sudden cold nights.

WINTER CARE

Winter may be for many collectors the time when their plants are the most prolific in producing buds. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the Seasons are reversed from those of the violet's native home, i.e., Spring below the Equator occurs at the time when the countries to the North are in the midst of Winter. Perhaps our buds form but drop before opening or within a day or two thereafter. Perhaps they blight and dry up after barely forming. This premature dropping of bud and flower need not be due to attack by thrip (however, if other thrip symtoms are present, it would be wise to take steps toward the eradication of this insect). One of the main reasons for the undevelopment of flowers is the lack of fresh air. This deficit must be balanced or corrected if we hope to see an open blossom during

the Winter. It may necessitate the installing of ventilators, or the moving of plants to rooms where there is constant opening of doors to the outside (provided they can be protected from the draft). Fresh air MUST be supplied. Another fault may lie in the escaping of gas, either cooking gas or coal gas. The leak may have been present all through the Spring, Summer and Fall, but its effect was counteracted by the constant stirring of fresh, outside air. Blighted buds can be due to one of two causes - the plants may have been allowed to become excessively dry, or there may not be enough nutriments in the soil to develop them to maturity. The fertilizer used may not be in correct balance for the proper nourishment of Saintpaulias. Some sources now claim that an overabundance of nitrogen in the soil is the fault of a plant losing its blooms prematurely.

Artificial humidity should be continued by the method used during the Summer. Constant, even temperature night and day, as regulated by our thermostats, should be avoided. If there is controlled heat, the thermostat should be turned back every night by at least five to ten degrees to give the plants a rest and respitory period. The plants should also be given their "bath" more regularly, as dust on them is apt to accumulate much more rapidly in a closed and furnace heated house. This dust robs the plant of the air which it naturally assimilates through its leaves, causing the plants to appear to collapse and shrink in size. Water and humidity must be stepped up, unless we have special humidifiers to counteract the dryness of the closed house.

A final care for Winter would be to assure that the plants are not subjected to chilling drafts from doors or windows, and that leaves are not in contact with cold window glass, or even placed too close to the chilling effects of the windows. Should the room in which the plants are kept become excessively chilled and the plants demand watering at this time, we should be sure to use water of room temperature. Water five to ten degrees higher, when applied to this cooler soil and container, will give off a thin vapor that will collect upon the leaves of the plant and may cause frostbite that would not be occasioned if "room temperature" water had been applied.

Saintpaulia care throughout the year simmers down to this: watering must be in accordance with the Season's demands, feed according to the extent of the plant's growth, and fresh air must be supplied at ALL times. Fresh air through proper ventilation cannot be over-emphasized. It is an absolute necessity.

When writing to the members of the magazine staff please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your reply.

INFORMATION ! !

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ADVENTURE! AFRICAN VIOLETS FROM SEED

Martha Mears

I have often heard it said that if you want something long enough and bad enough that somehow you will get it. Now that hasn't worked with me too many times but it did with a greenhouse!

I love to grow most any flower from seed. It seems like a great adventure; from the nice fine soil in a flat, the small seed scattered in, then the daily watching for the first germination; the weeks (sometimes months and years) of daily growth. At last the reward, when the plant blossoms, and you stand and look at all its beauty and marvel that this lovely plant could come from such a tiny seed. Then you are well repaid for all your work.

An even greater adventure is to hybridize or pollinate blossoms on your own plants. There is always a possibility of creating something outstanding and even if you don't, what a pleasure it is to look on the finished product and know that it is your own. Who doesn't think that his own child is just a little superior to the other person's?

Having had a lot of fun hybridizing roses, lilies, delphinium and amaryllis, I have looked longingly at my African Violets for years. When I would look at my over-crowded windows, though, it has always been something that I might do some day, when I got that long wished for greenhouse!

Last Winter I had a brilliant (?) idea that maybe, if I planted some seed early, I could grow the plants out in the men's greenhouse on some of the benches that were not occupied in the Summer, get them to flowering size and make some selections from them before cold weather.

I immediately started pollinating my violet blossoms, bought some seed, planted them, then my own, when ripened. I potted up the small seedlings, rooted many leaves of my older plants. How they grew in the heat and humidity of the greenhouse!

I kept branching out a little farther on the benches each week, until finally the men began to look at their place (and me) in desperation. In self-defense, they got busy and built a small greenhouse, just for me. What would I have done if they had not, for at moving time I had almost a thousand plants.

My first crosses were rather hurriedly made with little thought of the results, but I was lucky, I guess, for I have some promising seedlings from them. The seedlings from the seed that I purchased were rather a disappointment. I only had three that I cared to save from seventy-five plants. Most of them were ordinary blues not much different, and some not as good as, existing varieties.

When planting my seed, I tried various methods, equal parts of sand and peat, screened spaghnum, decayed apple wood and sand, vermiculite, and two parts of leaf mold and one of sand and I have found my preference for the latter. I have planted in flats, fruit jars, on bricks and in flower pots, and prefer the latter in this also.

Place drainage in the bottom of the pot, then a sterilized mixture of two parts leaf mold and one of sand with some fine charcoal added. The top inch of the same mixture is screened through a fine sieve. The pot is soaked in water from the bottom, then the fine seed is scattered over the top of the soil, pressed in but never covered. A piece of glass is placed over the top of the pot and a piece of paper over the glass. The pot is placed in a warm position with bottom heat preferred. Watering is best done from the bottom to keep from washing the fine seed. Never allow the surface of the soil to dry out.

I have found germination rather irregular with my seed, some plants will be showing second leaves while others are just germinating.

As soon as the seedlings show a little growth, start feeding with a Hyponex solution at the rate of ¼ teaspoon to a quart of water. Keep them as warm as possible without harming them and of course in diffused light.

These are the ones I set aside with the lovely Blue Girl foliage.

I like to transplant as soon as I can handle them. This transplanting is made into small flats, using the same soil mixture as the seedling pots and spacing about two inches apart. Continue feeding and as soon as the plants have from six to eight leaves they go into individual two inch pots, using one-half standard African Violet potting soil and one-half leaf mold. From now on, with a warm place, they will make rapid growth. I should say, - most of them will, for you will find a great variation in the development of the plants. From a group of seedlings of a Blue Girl cross planted in March, I had some plants blossom in Oct. of the same year, while some have not blossomed yet (January) and some will probably take the full year.

Now that the first excitement is over, I have settled down to planned crosses with some objectives in view. What are some of them? Larger flowers, deeper pinks, a Pink Girl with perfect foliage, a White Girl, breeding the DuPont foliage into profuse bloomers, cleaner reds and a good rose color. My aims too high? Well, you can always hope. Some of my seedlings now show promise of good breeding stock for the rose accomplishment.

Many articles have been written on how to make the actual crosses so I will not repeat it. After a cross is made, I cut a small light weight card about ¼ inch square, place a number on it, punch a hole in the corner, put a piece of thread through the hole and tie this card on the seed pod stem. I keep a book and write in it the number on the card, the name of the parents, always using the seed parent first, thus, No. 21, Blue Girl x White Lady. I leave space below each cross listed for remarks, about germination, how planted, date, and number of plants produced. This number follows the seed and seedling through its growing period, is placed on the seed packet until planting time, marked on the pot when planted, and the seedlings retain this number until they are discarded or each plant saved receives a number or name of it's own.

This saves a lot of writing on labels and keeps your seedlings from becoming mixed. When growing several groups of seedlings, you often forget these details. You can refer to your book by number to check the parentage of the seedlings, if you wish to do any back crossing. In one group of forty seedlings with Blue Girl as seed parent, I had twenty-two plants that showed distinct Blue Girl leaf characteristics. This information is interesting to know, if not useful.

Unless the plant is seeded too heavily, it will not stop blooming, but it is better to pollinate several flowers of the same cross to take care of any mishaps or of seed that is not too viable.

Seed pods take from four to six months to ripen, but you will note a swelling of the ovary a few days after pollination to show that the cross has taken. As soon as the seed pod stem starts to shrivel, remove it from the plant and place in a small open dish to finish ripening. When the pod is dry and brittle, break it open and loosen the seed with a needle or pin, holding the pot over some container to catch the seed as they fall. Place the seed in wax paper or cellophane, fold it up, pinning or clamping the number to the package.

Some people think that, if you hold the seed for about three weeks before

planting, you will get quicker and better germination. This I have not found yet.

I have failed completely with some crosses, but I am trying again. Some pollen seems much more potent than others, especially DuPont, Lavender Pink and Gorgeous, and these two have a lot of pollen, while White Lady polen is very scarce. While the straight DuPont crosses produce a lot of seed, so far I have had poor germination from it, - why, I do not know.

I told you about the pleasure and excitement of the finished product. Well, there was a whole group of lovely plants. I had watched their development for many months, and as they grew, noted the difference in their foliage. I set aside some of the loveliest leaves, noted the first buds form and grew all excited.

The first thing in the morning I would hurry down stairs to the greenhouse, often before dressing, to see if just one had opened. It seemed that it would take forever! Then a little color showed and as I am an impatient person, I carried the seedlings from plant to plant of my blooming violets, comparing the color of the buds, trying to decide what the color was going to be. I had one plant, a Blue Girl x Pink Beauty cross with lovely Blue Girl foliage. The bud was so pale, and as I carried it each day to compare it to Pink Beauty buds, I was very sure that I had a perfect Pink Girl, but when it opened it was a medium blue with white on the reverse of the petals.

All is not pleasure in growing African violets from seed. The sad part was yet to come. I had to start selecting. Bench space was filling up and I could not keep them all. Sadly I went with my bucket, I picked up each plant, looked at it, trying to find some fault, and reluctantly set it down again. I finally dumped a few in the bucket, looked at the bench space, and saw that I hadn't made much room. I quit for a few days, I couldn't part with another one. New plants were demanding more space, so I had to get at this unhappy work again, to make myself be real firm, so out they went.

Many of us can have a lot of fun and pleasure with this lovely adventure, of growing violets from seed, so get busy pollinating some of your flowers. Who knows? YOU may be the one to produce that most beloved of all house plants, The Perfect African Violet.

These are the ones that I was so unhappy about discarding.

IMPORTANCE OF SOIL

Harriet F. Lawton

In growing plants there are usually certain basic things to be dealt with. The requirements of different kinds of plants vary somewhat as to type of soil used, light, humidity, etc. But, when selecting the plant you wish to raise, read up on it all you can and then take one step at a time. If things go wrong, then do more reading or consult your State College. It is sort of a process of elimination and takes much patience, if one is to succeed, and there are many pitfalls! !

The items to be considered with most plants are:

1. Soil. (the PH -- degree of acidity or alkalinity. Complete analysis for amount of different elements.)
2. Gas. (Air must be free from coal gas or illuminating gas. Slightest trace causes trouble.)
3. Humidity.
4. Watering.
5. Light.
6. Fresh air.
7. Temperature.

These are given in the order of what I consider their importance, although others might not agree. Also, with different plants, the order of the importance of these items might change.

Start with a good basic soil. "Soil" is a tremendous study even to those who have been at it for years. There are soil testing kits on the market, but one should have a complete analysis, giving the amounts of the various elements contained in the soil, not just the PH reading for acidity or alkalinity.

In deciding on the right soil, send a sample to your State College for a complete analysis. This service is free for the asking; do make use of it. There may be too much or too little of the major elements necessary to healthy plants. If so, your college will advise you and tell you how to balance your soil to meet your needs. If one has too much of certain elements, it will lock up other elements which the plant needs and, although they may be present in the soil, they are not available for use by the plant.

In growing plants, one should work from the bottom or root system up. Healthy roots should be white, not brown or black. Such roots are either dead or diseased. One commercial grower from whom we bought plants recently, (incidentally not Saintpaulias) took up the plants and looked at the root system with great pride and referred to it as "the business end." So, one cannot expect to have healthy plants unless he obtains a "good business end" first. What will make a good root system? That varies with the kind of plant. There are certain fundamentals to be followed, as listed above, which make for good plant growth. We hear about people with a green thumb, but such folks usually follow certain basic facts about their plant's needs, and, beyond that, some experimenting is necessary. Take one step at a time and be sure you clear this through before you go on to the next.

If one has gas in the house, that automatically checks off. In my own case, I dealt with the gas first as plants showed decided signs of gas poisoning. (Buds were very dark, almost black and dropped before opening.) After this was rectified, buds continued to drop. Plants were on a sun porch, (East and South exposure) and temperature dropped quite low at night in winter. Double windows were put on but bud drop continued. It happened that I was using soil from a very fine greenhouse so that was farthest from my mind. However, as a last resort, I had the soil tested. A complete analysis was made. It tested a PH 6.2 (too acid) and it held too high a nitrogen content or soluble salts. This last was causing the bud drop. The tops of plants were very healthy but roots did not penetrate this soil. This high nitrogen content was one cause of bud drop.

A change of soil was made. Many buds formed only to fall a day or so after opening. This was a step forward but still a bit discouraging. My last alternative of the plants' requirements was lack of fresh air, and I pinned my faith on this slender thread, as everything else had been tried.

Living in a small house with an aged person is not conducive to airing the place daily because of drafts. But, if fresh air is let in the first thing in the morning, then it is sure to be seen to and is out of the way for the day. A good way is to close the door to the plant room, open a window wide in an adjoining room for about half hour, and after the window has been closed, open the plant room door so the fresh air may circulate. Try this and see how much better you feel. Is it any wonder the plants like it? ! ! I believe this stale air could almost be compared to a form of gas poisoning, although of a lesser form. Stale air is burned up air and full of gases, but fresh air lets in oxygen which the plants need.

Now, to get back to the topic of this article, "Soil". One who is not familiar with soils can flounder around and not know just how to go about mixing the right soil for a given plant. I have found an extremely good way for a person who lacks knowledge is to first get a good basic soil after contacting your State College. Then, using that as a base upon which to build, make up small amounts of your own mixtures, numbering each and, keeping a record of the contents of each. I have made about seven in all, numbering them "one" to "seven" inclusive. The basic soil is a sandy loam from a local greenhouse testing a PH 6.5. It has some enriching

in it, but over the years have found it is not sufficient. From that I have branched out making the seven different mixtures.

1. 4 parts loam 1 part peat 1 part sand.	Feed with complete fertilizer in liquid form as this has no enriching ir it, excepting a small amount in the loam.
2. 1 part loam 1 part peat 1 part sand.	Feed with complete fertilizer as in 1.

Another mixture has a portion of bone meal, superphosphate and well rotted cow manure. We know that bone meal is available to the plant gradually and over a long period of time. The cow manure makes for healthy leaf growth and produces the chlorophyll or coloring in the leaves. The superphosphate is bud forming and is available to the plant at once. Another mixture may not contain any peat, etc.

Pot up plants of a similar size, giving them all comparable growing conditions but for the soil. Watch their growth above ground. In a few weeks examine the root growth. You will then know which is a failure and weed that one out. Continue to weed out and carry on until blooming. Then, see which one of two or three mixtures gives you the most satisfaction for size and color of bloom and the amount of bloom. Set up small experiments, and I am sure you will find it as interesting as I have. It's a lot of fun and one learns much from it. What might prove good for one would be bad in another location. Type of watering would also make a difference in the soil mixture to be used. Less peat is needed in automatic watering, and heavier soils should be treated differently from lighter soils. Heavier soils hold the moisture longer while sandy soils dry out much quicker. One needs to be a bit more careful in not overwatering with the heavier soils.

Now, just a word of caution in regard to earth worms. These are usually considered beneficial, especially in the garden. But, in a flower pot they are a real nuisance and can and do cause damage. Earth worms come from eggs, and although there may not be any evidence of them in soil brought in from the garden, purchased from your local greenhouse, or in rotted cow manure, they can hatch out in any of these listed, during the time it is standing waiting to be used. Dampness is conducive to keeping these worms alive, whereas, if earth or manure dries out, the worm will not live. I have just run across one example of this. A pail of rotted cow manure was purchased many weeks ago and is stored in the cellar, being used as it is needed. The manure is still moist and worms are found in it.

In case a worm finds its way into a pot, it will create a disturbance about the roots and so far as the plant is concerned, there is evidence of wilt of the leaves. A friend who had this difficulty, felt sure a worm was in the pot of a Saintpaulia, as she noticed the worm castings in the saucer. Her way was to get rid of the worm by keeping her plant quite on the dry side until she felt sure the worm was dead. My preference is to take the plant out of its pot to be sure of what's going on underneath, for there can be other causes of wilt aside from the earth worm.

HOUSEPLANTS

African Violets, table ferns, small palms, Ivies, Begonias, Cacti and succulents and other suitable plants for that window garden. In fertilizers we have Plant Marvel, Hyponex, Ferto Pots and bricks, N.N.O.R, insecticide and other accessories. Send for listing and tell us your needs. We may be able to help you find the articles you need. We have many plants not listed in our printed list for those visiting us here at the Nursery.

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Dept. A Greensboro, Maryland

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

Elsie Freed

Once upon a time, there was one of God's newly erected churches in the city of our glorious Capitol that wanted very much to stand free of its mortgage shackles. Please, friends, pardon me for writing this in the form of a fairy tale - but . . . as we let the facts unravel may it remind you, too, of a bed time story and one that, as we drift off into dreamland, will create in us the desire to form a similar plan.

Adelaid Aldridge of Washington, a tendor of the Church's "Plant Booth", sensed the necessity of featuring on this occasion - America's most popular house-plant, the African Violet. So, in ample time the lady commenced preparing and propagating.

During the summer of 1947, Adelaid visited two of her "Pen" acquaintances, Mary Parker of Knoxville who needs no further introduction and Mrs. Joseph Preston of Roanoke, Va. Finally, the Aldridge chariot was guided and came to a halt in front of 4409 River Road at the end of that particular violet-seeking jaunt, thus concluding many friendly little gibes made by the members of the family because of having to hold tiers of carefully packed boxes. (I wonder, if among us there are any who have not experienced this agony of discomfort?)

Now, many of you are wondering - I know - about the welfare of the little orphaned plants during this little vacation. Fortunately, they had behaved remarkably well, under the loving care rendered by Adelaid's many friends who gladly whisked them into their own homes and offered them shelter. In addition to these kind neighbors, was a Junior Hi lad who assumed the responsibility of 25 large blooming-size plants; and if diplomas could be granted for carefully following instructions, he could already be considered a graduate.

I want to commend Adelaid on her object for this festival, to present desirable "home-grown" and "disease free" Saintpaulias. Therefore, she took precautions that many of us become careless about. In purchasing plants, she never failed to keep them under her vigilant "watch", isolated, until convinced they were absolutely healthy. After which time, many of these plants were then loaned out to various church members in order to relieve the congestion at the Aldridge residence. However, these plants continued to grow under a weekly inspection by their "mommie". And, as an extra precaution, all earth and manure that was used was baked in an electric roaster.

Windows in Adelaid's home had long since been overflowing with violets, as was also her porch. In this latter location, bamboo curtains were used to protect the plants from the sun. Then . . . as soon as Jack Frost could be expected to leave his calling card - folding tables were erected and violets were re-arranged. However, Adelaid is here with us now, so I'll step aside and have her continue with this narrative:

"Lamps were placed on these tables, providing all plants with 15-16 hours of light (2-25 watts were used in each lamp). But my loveliest plants were grown in a small 'cold frame' attached to the basement window. For this, I used Celloglass plus a few branches because of its Eastern and South-eastern exposure. At night, I turned on a 150 watt light and had the basement window open, and thus the air from it would warm the frame too. The outside I covered over each night, with a sleeping bag.

"It took three hours of continuous work daily to water, spray and transplant. Most of the pots were set in drip pans for colony watering. I am also a firm believer in dressing up your plant by painting the pot. The comparison is the same as when we are wearing our old work togs and then dress for a party. Even a non-blooming plant is attractive in a gaily colored container. In two year's time, I have painted 1000 flower pots!

"Violets generally, were given wonderful publicity, as our display was glamorous, and the 'show' free, attracting enthusiasts from five different states beside those in our District of Columbia. Mrs. Fonce Ford and Mrs. W. Duff Wilson, two well-known collectors, aided me in enlarging by contribution, until it included fifty-eight differently named violets, tho' probably there were some duplicates, as is frequently found in any large group. Small common varieties sold at the reasonable sum of 50¢; 75¢ - $1.00 for rare ones; budding plants, $1.00; the blooming size were tagged from $1.25 - $1.50; while "show" plants in four-inch pots brought $2.50. At this event, I sold all my plants except some 275 seedlings and what leaves I had under propagation. The realized profit from African Violets alone amounted to $512.00 while from another close-by table displaying mostly Hoyas the return was only $23.00. I sold but "one of a kind" of the rare and unusual varieties to each person. This event took place on the Fourteenth of November, 1947, between the hours of 2 and 9 p.m. in the Mt. Pleasant Congregational Church, 1410 Columbia Road, N. W.

"Gift Orchid was our most popular violet, Red Spoon second, and Lavender Lady, third. Perhaps you may find this explanation regarding Gift Orchid interesting? I named it and am endeavoring to have it registered. It is of Neptune origin, tho' the flowers resemble Redland in color, and because of its having been a 'gift' thru three different exchanges, and then came to me for our sale, I feel that the name is an appropriate one."

Folks, you are now being switched back again to your news editor, and I, for one, wish to thank Mrs. Adelaid Aldridge for a most interesting and informative story. I know you must be a courageous person to have sponsored such an undertaking and you have set before us a marvelous lesson!

Pictures taken at the Luncheon Meeting at Cincinnati Club, Friday, April 29, 1949.

African Violet Society of America in Session at Dinn

The Society met in official session Friday evening to hear a distinguished speak
Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Laurie gave a very informative address on "African Violets
magazine. and will be publised in the September issue of the African Violet maga

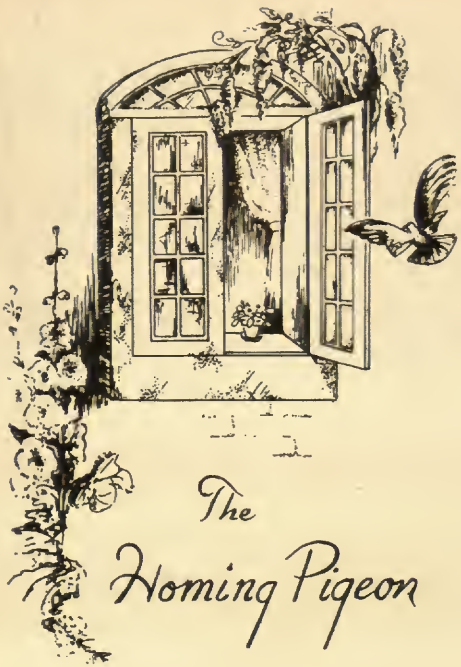
At the close of the dinner meeting a newly released colored movie was shown . .
the collection of several members were also shown.

Meeting 6:30 P.M. April 29, 1949 at The Cincinnati Club.

Dr. Alex Laurie, Head of the Floriculture Department of Ohio State University, s I Know Them". A copy of the main points of his address has been given to the ne.

wenty-two minutes of interesting activities in Cincinnati. Kodachrome slides from

Pictures taken at the Luncheon Meeting at the Cincinnati Club, Friday, April 29, 1942.



Feasterville, Penna.
May 15, 1949

Dear Friends,

I think it very appropriate to give you a report on our progress in this, my final letter. From the little white egg laid by the Society, we hatched into squabs and are now recognized, as matured birds. We have 105 Pigeons in mid-air, delivering messages among 1050 members. There are 10 Directors' Units in circulation which help to keep our family ties unbroken.

In an endeavor to prevent the wheels of progress from slowing down (due to a large enrollment) I have appointed a staff of assistants. Gladys Canner: Rt. 1, Creek Rd., Herkimer, N. Y. is our Membership Chairman and will answer inquiries pertaining to joining.

Rosa Peters: 1726 E. Leonard Rd., R. R. 4, Grand Rapids 5, Mich. is our Circulating Agent - whose duty it is to obtain for the Units data on supplies for the Conductress Pigeon. Our motive is not to give a "plug" to manufacturers, but to report seemingly good products to our members. If anyone objects to paying postage on these special Pigeons semi-annually, his or her name may be removed from the Conductress roll, without its affecting their position in the flight of the regular bird, by contacting this office. When a person is a member in more than one Unit, an attempt will be made to have the Conductress Pigeon fly their way but once, tho' if it proves impractical because of the checking involved, please co-operate by simply regarding it as one small handicap against the many advantages received in belonging to more than one group.

Sorry to have strayed from "Staff" topic and I will continue. Violet Berry: 710 E. 6th St., Mt. Vernon, Ind. is our Talent Scout and will furnish an article in each flight of the Conductress Pigeon. Anyone desiring to submit material may contact Violet.

Soon Lillian Greer: 1822 Arapahoe St., Golden, Colorado, will assist with our correspondence as our mail box is overflowing. Your small courtesy of enclosing "return postage" when replies are expected, will be appreciated.

Eleanor May: 125 A. Ardmore Av., Ardmore, Pa. has been indispensable to me, too. Her task, about completed, is a couple of scrap books made with the lovely Christmas cards I received this past season from Pigeons. These greetings are too attractive to store away and soooo - soon they will be spreading more cheer in a ward of the Phila. Shriner's Hospital for Crippled Children, an organization where kiddies of any are accepted.

Next in line is Neil Miller: Layton's Lake, Penns Grove, N. J. - who is our "Hobby Chairman" and assumes the responsibility of interesting hospitalized Veterans in our violet project. He has successfully contacted many co-workers, but more assistance is required in this wide field. Brown's of Newnan, Ga., Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, Pa. and Martha Mears, Anderson, Ind. are but a few who have promised plant contributions. Helen Van Pelt Wilson and Mary Margaret Odom are both behind us with available books. Pigeon members (too numerous to list) are offering their aid in organizing chapters within the hospitals. But . . . there is yet another angle that needs consideration - an Incidental Expense Fund to pay express on these gifts so graciously given. And, since this "Hobby" is a protege of the Homing Pigeons it recently gave me great pleasure to send a $25.00 check to Neil for a nest egg. May others, who wish to be represented in this worthy work (but have no surplus violets to give care to contribute money, there is no sum too large or too small, but that it will be gratefully accepted. I am confident that within the next few weeks, Neil will have made sufficient progress that we can expect a detailed account of their activities to appear in each ensuing issue of "The African Violet Magazine". To him and his wife, Mary - I am deeply indebted.

And, to the Staff in general - may I express my appreciation for your fine co-operation.

Now, since my allotted space has been used, in resigning I bid you all an affectionate farewell!

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Croasdale Freed

Conductress.

PROPAGATION AND CARE OF SAINTPAULIAS

Eloise Dysart

The African Violet Society of America is welcoming many new members these days. Many of these probably are just beginning the fascinating hobby of growing Saintpaulias and would like some information regarding the propagation and care of this most popular house plant.

African violets are propagated from leaf cuttings, offshoots (or suckers) which sometime grow on the main trunk of a plant and which can be cut off and rooted, and from seeds.

The most popular of these for new growers is the leaf cutting method. Firm, healthy leaves that are not too old are best for rooting. They may be placed with the stem in water until a good root system is developed. At this point, they may be placed in soil or other growing medium, or they may be left in water until little plantlets appear. In this latter case, in transferring to pots, the small plants should be left above the soil. In either case, the parent leaf should be supported so that its weight will not uproot the new plants. Toothpicks with cotton on the end may be used for this purpose.

A good plan to use in water propagation is to cover the glass or jar with waxpaper, cutting holes for the petioles (stems). This supports the leaf and forestalls bruising. A hole should be cut in the paper (besides the ones in which the petioles are placed), to allow for a free circulation of air. Never allow the water to evaporate to a point where the end of the stem is out of water.

After placing in a growing medium (soil, peat moss and vermiculite, vermiculite alone, or sand), be sure the cotton supporting the parent leaf does not become wet during watering, as this may cause the leaf to rot before the baby plants are large enough to live alone. When the little plants are 1½ to 2 inches high, the parent leaf may be removed, cutting at the soil with a sharp knife or razor blade.

When there are two or more plantlets together, they may be divided at the time the parent leaf is removed, or may be allowed to grow a few weeks more before dividing. Those of you who are growing small plants for the first time may want to wait until they are a little larger and sturdier before dividing - - say, until the outside leaves are two to three inches high. Separate plants may be distinguished by the small leaves in the center or crown of each plant. To divide, enough of the soil should be removed to see where the plants are joined together. They should be cut apart with a razor blade or sharp knife, being careful to leave all the roots possible on each little plant.

Another way to divide is to cut down into the soil between the small plants, leaving them undisturbed for about a month, so they may develop their own separate root systems, before being lifted out and potted separately.

If peat moss and vermiculite, or other rooting medium, is used to grow plants from leaf cuttings, the petiole should be cut to a length of not over 1½ inch and inserted in the rooting mixture for an inch or a little more or less. If the stem is buried too deep, the little plant will have too far to grow before it reaches the surface - - or it may never grow at all. This mixture should be kept damp (not soaking wet) with a water solution of a complete plant food, following printed directions for "Sand culture"; or plain water may be used, using the plant food at weekly intervals. However, the constant use of the food speeds the growth of the little plants. When plants grow to the proper height, the same procedure may be followed for dividing that is given above.

Plants that are fed regularly need not be repotted into large pots as they grow. A three inch pot is usually adequate for a mature plant. Many violet growers use a popular plant food which contains all essential nutriments, which is used once a week. Other plant foods for house plants have been used successfully by following directions on the package. Feedings should not be made oftener or of greater strength than directions specify, as the roots may be burned.

Woods dirt with some leaf mold is excellent soil to use. All soil should be sterilized to destroy harmful organisms. This may be done chemically, in an oven, or by pouring boiling water through the soil in a sieve. Manure in the bottom of the pot is very good, but should be sterilized before using. Sheep manure, which is already sterilized, can be bought in seed stores. About one teaspoon sheep manure to a three inch pot should be used - - in other size pots, in proportion to the size of the pot. If soil is heavy, peat moss and/or vermiculite or sand may be added to lighten it, making it possible for the roots to get the air which they need.

If suckers appear on the main stem or trunk of a Saintpaulia (in much the same way that suckers grow on tomato plants), they should not be left to grow, as they use the strength that should go into blooms, and also give the plant a ragged appearance. They should be worked loose gently, using a sharp pointed instrument. A nut pick is excellent for this. These suckers will form plants, if they are rooted by placing on marbles or gravel in a bowl containing water, or in any of the other rooting mediums mentioned above.

Saintpaulias require lots of light, and in most instances bloom better if they get some sun. An East or North exposure is considered by some growers to be ideal. If they are placed in a South or West window, they must be shielded from the

hot sun during the middle of the day in Winter and most of the day in Summer.

These plants like lots of humidity, and while they may grow in a dry atmosphere, they will not bloom without moist, fresh air.

African violets may be watered from below or from the top, but care should be taken to see that the sun does not shine on leaves that are wet, as they will be burned and ruined. They will love an occasional shower bath, washing the leaves gently under running water or spray, using tepid or slightly warm water. Be sure they dry in the shade.

Never water Saintpaulias with cold water. Always use tepid or slightly warm water. It has been said that more African violets have been drowned than dried up. A "happy medium" must be reached in watering. The soil should be neither soggy nor dry, but should be kept slightly damp, A light watering each day is better than saturating one day and leaving to dry out for two or three days. However, if the soil does become dry, a soaking from beneath is called for. Many people have good results by watering from below and removing the pot from the water when the top of the soil becomes moist. Others water lightly from the top each day.

Plastic or glazed pots hold moisture and need less watering than clay pots. However, if clay pots are used and they dry out too quickly, they either may be painted or wrapped with aluminum foil to prevent drying out of the pot and soil.

The aluminum foil also serves the purpose of protecting the leaves from the rough edge of the pot. Another remedy for the bruising of stems and leaves on the pot is to dip the top of the dry pot, before using, in melted paraffin.

People ask "How long does it take an African violet to develop from a leaf cutting to a blooming plant?" A broad answer is "from six months to a year and a half". However, with good care and under good growing conditions, most plants will bloom within eight to ten months.

Someone once told me - - "African violets are not hard to grow, but they do require lots of love to thrive!"

Pictures and a report of the show in Cincinnati, will be in the September issue — Editor

AFRICAN VIOLETS

New Revised Catalog, featuring Lovely new duPont Hybrids, Supremes, and Double flowering types. SUMMER SPECIALS, Double Margaret, White Supreme, Blush Supreme, Plum Satin, Double Supreme, $1.50 each.
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TINARI FLORAL GARDENS

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A SUGGESTION

Mabel Rodabough

There are so many small plants in my collection that I was at a loss to know what to use for saucers, until one day I went visiting. My hostess, who has three hundred cacti and succulents, had solved the problem. She was using old zinc can lids. One hard tap with the hammer and out comes the porcelain inset, making a nice deep saucer for the small pots.

I painted mine white to match the pots.

Just a word about paint. Several people told me they had tried painting pots white, but, in watering from the bottom, the paint came off around the lower part of the pots.

I use only plax paint, as it makes a finish just like enamel baked on - and it stays white.

ANOTHER SAINTPAULIA AILMENT!

Eloise Dysart

Wouldn't it be wonderful if there were no pests for Saintpaulia growers to worry about — no insects, no nematodes or mites, no diseases, no fungi?

It would be much more pleasant to write and to read about healthy plants — to have no fear that our plants will be victims of an attack of some kind.

But alas! — this is impossible!

The next best thing is to know what to do in case our plants do fall prey to a pest. Therefore, I should like to pass on an experience I had last Summer, for the benefit of others who may have the same misfortune.

Early in the Summer, the center leaves of some of my Saintpaulias curled toward the center of the plant and had a whitish look. Some of the leaves merely curled, or were warped, without showing any white.

Having heard about cyclamen mite, I immediately suspected that. However, someone told me that this condition was caused by overwatering.

Upon returning from a two weeks' vacation, during which time they definitely had not been overwatered, I found that more plants were affected. Everyday one or two more curled up in the center. The center leaves of a few died.

The University of Tennessee Experiment Station examined plants thus affected and could find no cause for this condition. No insect was found, even under the microscope. While nothing was settled definitely, it is my opinion that this condition is caused by a fungus of some sort. It very definitely spreads from plant to plant, apparently through the air. I'm wondering if this can be the disease known as "Stunt".

Merely because of the fact that in our garden supplies we had End-o-pest, I started using this dust insecticide and fungicide.

Every time a plant showed signs of this condition, it was moved away from healthy plants. I put all affected plants under some shrubs on the North side of the house, watering them daily with a watering pot. Once a week they were dusted thoroughly with End-o-pest. The dust was also allowed to cover the top of the soil in the pots. There were finally about sixty plants so isolated.

At the end of six weeks, 38 plants were cured, and moved back into the house. Two weeks more an 15 or 16 more plants came back in. Two plants died during the outdoor sojourn.

It was now becoming too cold at night, so the remaining six or seven plants were moved in, but still isolated. These were the worst of the lot and had lost their centers. However, End-o-pest treatments were continued two or three weeks longer, at which time, those which had grown new centers were put back with healthy plants. Two or three were thrown away, because they had lost so many leaves and were common varieties. If they had been rare, I would have kept them, for they had recovered and could have been salvaged.

Where the centers had died, there usually grew more than one "sucker" or "crown". All except the one nearest the center were cut out, leaving that one to cover the old scar and become the new center. The other suckers were rooted to make new plants.

Now, in March, (and indeed even much earlier), it is impossible to point out the plants that suffered. However, the growth of the plants was greatly retarded, and they have taken many more months to mature than their "brothers and sisters" who escaped the epidemic.

After using the End-o-pest, I found that others had tried the same remedy. Some, who had not been consistent in its use, or who gave up too soon, were unsuccessful.

Success depends upon isolation of sick plants and faithful and continued use of the fungicide.

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"SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC"

Charlotte Hughes

The word Zodiac means little animals and the Zodiac is a belt 16 degrees wide extending right around the sky. In this belt are the apparent paths of the Sun and Moon and leading planets.

The marking off in the sky of the Zodiac and the division of the belt into twelve equal parts, each named after a leading constellation in it, was the beginning of astrology. No one can say who first marked out the Zodiac and divided and named its twelve parts, but it was probably the work of Babylonion Stargazers 2000 years before Jesus was born.

Just one of the theories is that names were suggested for these twelve "Zodiac Signs" by the Seasons and their agricultural operations. The Spring signs, the Rams, Bull and Twins are supposed to mark the bringing forth of young by the flocks and herds. The Crab marks the time when the Sun begins to go back toward the Equator, moving backward as the Crab was supposed to do. The Lion symbolizes the fierceness of the Summer Sun.

The Virgin, which is Flower Day, symbolizes the Gleaner of Corn - represents the Harvest, and shows a girl holding a flower in her hand. It is fun to make believe the right time is when the Sign is in the Flower. There is no harm done, and it may help us to keep our plants from wilting; and it keeps us at our work, planning to get just so much done every month of the year. Last July, I gave a friend 23 leaves, she lost only one leaf, some are in bloom and she has started them all over again, I always work in the Sign and on down until the "Sign" is leaving the feet. I use the Ladies' Birthday Almanac. It is very easy to read and is published by the Chattanooga Medicine Company, Chattanooga, Tenn.

The dates of the Zodiac for dividing, transplanting and setting of leaves for 1949:

Jan. 19th and 20th, and can be used until the sign reaches the feet to good advantage.

Feb. 15th and 16th, are the real Flower Days, good to use until the 2nd of March when the "Sign" is going out of the Feet.

Mar. 14th and 15th, on until 30th of March, Sign will be in the Feet.

Apr. 11th and 12th, good until 26th.

May 8th and 9th, good until 23rd.

June 5th and 6th, good until 20th.

July 2nd and 3rd, also 29th and 30th.

Aug. 25th and 26th, good until Sept. 9th.

Sept. 22nd and 23rd, good until Oct. 7th.

Oct. 19th and 20th, good until Nov. 3rd.

Nov. 16th and 17th, good to the 30th when the Sign will still be in the Feet.

Dec. 13th and 14th, good until the 29th.

I have found no suggestions for using the time between the Actual Flower Day and the Sign of the Fishes; that is my own idea and for me it works just the same, but the very next Sign falls in the Head, and it is not so good.

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LET'S VISIT

Let's visit with Mrs. Martha Husted in Washington D. C. During the preliminary introductions, we are immediately attracted to Martha (perhaps we had previously written her many letters, so the visit is like renewing an acquaintance) and meet husband Bill, whose efficiency with the saw, hammer, and nails we soon find in evidence all about the house. If we are fortunate, their dog Ginger will take a fancy to us and show proof of it by finding one of her favorite pipes (in some corner) and, lying by our feet, punctuate all remarks as she goes to work with her gnawing.

Martha's plants are always lovely - clean and shiny; even though, during a bout with a gas leak, she resorted to a bit of deceit and downright fraud by pinching off the ends of her bloom stalks (just behind the calyx) and then replacing all her newly fallen blossoms. Or so we thought until she blithely removed one to show us the clever trick. "Why not?" she said. "The bloom does not really deteriorate for quite some time after it has been shed, so why not enjoy it on the plant where it belongs?"

We start the "viewing" upstairs in the back bedroom which has a north-east exposure and are immediately entranced at the vision of a window full of blooming plants. Martha pulls out one of the shelves to get a plant for us to see and our interest momentarily goes in another direction. We are attracted to the shelves themselves; Bill's handiwork, of course. The windows in the Husted home are all of the casement type, which allows for quite a recess in the wall. In this recess is built a wooden framework with variously spaced grooves up the sides. Into these grooves are slid the glass shelves that hold many of the plants. Another nice feature, we notice, is that the grooves are arranged so that it is possible to raise, or lower, a shelf to allow room for plants in two, three or four inch pots. The shelves and framework are about six inches deep. Martha explains that this depth makes it possible to slide an entire shelf away from the window by a few inches on cold days or nights to eliminate the danger of frost from close contact with the glass. We live and we learn!

The collection, orderly and artistically displayed throughout the house - from the bedrooms to the basement, started about five years ago with the purchase of the unprecedented Blue Boy. A subsequent motor trip gave her opportunity to "ring door bells" throughout Maryland and Pennsylvania for one of the many splendid Pink Beauties blooming in the windows. The first sight of Blue Girl left her "fit to be tied"and another collector was born. Naturally the "girls" are among her favorites along with the "reds". Martha

tells us that she loves all the Blue Girls, regardless of the name that has been attached to them. Her Orchid Girl is one of the finest of this variety we will find anyplace, compact and perfectly shaped, with even crenation and quite large cream splotches at the base of the leaves. There was no hesitation when asked her favorite "red", for she immediately replied "Rosalie". Until recently her collection had embraced many of the old and newer varieties but her love for the "girls" and the "reds" - along with limited space - has started a trend toward specializing in that direction. When elaborating upon her "Rosalie" statement, Martha did add that this was her choice at the moment, but that she had in propagation several new "reds" and would like to reserve judgment until they had passed the "test" by coming into full bloom with maturity. Her latest addition is a seedling of Blue Girl and White Lady and has the usual fine crenate foliage, but the bloom is shaped like no other we have yet seen, on an African violet. The lobes are more deeply scalloped so as to give a definite semblance of petals and are curled backwards in a rather airy effect.

The tour through the house eventually ends in the basement, where leaves are always in the process of propagation. Leaves are always first placed in water for a few days, then Martha plants them in her "propagator" which contains nothing but vermiculite at a depth of about two inches and watered occasionally with a Vitamin B1 solution. (No fertilizers are used in the case.) This propagator has one innovation that we had not come across previously. It is an oblong acquarium, 15 inches wide and 17 inches long. Bill has made a peaked top, instead of the usual sheet of glass, of wood covered with cello-glass. In the peak he has drilled a hole through which has been passed an electric cord and the socket inside the propagating case usually carries a 25 watt bulb for light and heat. A 40 watt bulb has been used, but we were cautioned that, in this case, there must be a much larger crack between the terrarium and the top than you would need with a bulb of lesser wattage. It is most important, Martha advises, that the case have a crack for the admittance of air, which is very essential. The location of the Husted propagator impresses the fact that "natural" light is not necessary for the rooting of African Violet leaves and the production of plantlets, because it is at least ten feet away from any window in their recreation room. The case has held, upon occasion, 72 leaves - nine rows containing eight leaves each. Size of the leaves to be propagated would change this number, as large leaves would naturally need more of an accommodation.

The leaf is removed when the clump of plantlets is quite small and transferred en masse into 2 inch pots containing a potting mixture of equal parts vermiculite and Hyper Humus, with about a teaspoon of Vitaloam - to the measure of a two inch pot. When large enough to handle, the small plants are pushed from the parent leaf with a toothpick and repotted separately into the same size pot and

YOUR HINT HUNTER

Phyllis Ferrall
Rt. 5, Box 551
Battle Creek, Mich.

You are all very nice in your response to our Hint Column. Every letter I have received has had such enthusiasm and personal interest in it. Thanks again; keep your letters coming.

In our first Hint Hunter column was a suggestion for shocking plants into bloom in the refrigerator, leaving them in for not over four minutes. Mrs. Florence Foltz, of Lewistown, Pa., put a Blue Boy in her refrigerator and forgot it for twenty-nine minutes. The plant had previously not bloomed for one and a half years; a present writing, it is in bud. (The violet is surely unpredictable!)

Don't forget to give your plants fresh air. They need it.

Anyone interested in Hydroponics may obtain an interesting booklet from Chapman and Gilbert, 830 West Ivy, San Diego, Calif.

Dip flower pot rims in paraffin to prevent rim rot on petioles.

Equal parts of water and alcohol used in sprayer kills mealy bugs.

Mrs. Joan E. Copeland of Canada says: "I use about a gallon of water each time I water my violets, and as I work time is precious, and I spill many drops around. The other morning, in walked friend husband, a hot water bag slung over his shoulder, and by operating the little clamp on the end of the tube, he watered all my violets in about half the time it had taken me, with no drips at all!"

What would we do without our wonderful husbands!

From Mary Erlinger, Belleville, Ill. -- Small tuna fish, salmon or pineapple cans make wonderful stands for pots, especially when you are crowded. One plant is placed on the table or shelf, while the one next to it is raised by the can, which is turned upside down. These can be painted or covered with colored oilcloth.

I have some window extensions, made of heavy gauge metal, which are ideal to set chick feeders on. This permits them to be far enough away from the glass to accommodate very large plants.

Editors Note:

When writing to Mrs. Ferrall, please enclose a self addressd stamped envelope for your reply.

LETS VISIT

Cont. from Page 29

mixture and the leaf used for another setting. The small pots are usually kept in trays at the basement windows under small flourescent lights that burn throughout the night. However, upon occasion, glass trays or coffee tins have been used for the transplanting of leaf clumps, where they flourish abundantly without drainage . When the plants are ready to be transplanted into their three inch pots, garden soil, after it has been sterilized for one hour at a temperature of 250 degrees in an electric oven and stirred three times during the process, is added to the above mixture.

During the summer, many of the plants are transferred to a screened porch with the same north-east exposure, where they grow and bloom luxuriously. Throughout the year a fairly regular spraying program is kept, using Optox mainly, with an occasional change to NNOR.

We take leave of the Husteds, wending our way to another visit, with a glow in our eyes and a firm resolve to throw out all our own plants and start anew when we return home.

"The Visitors"

AFRICAN VIOLETS

Large, healthy plants out of 3 inch pots. Blue Girl (Pat.), Lavender Lady, Pink Beauty (Pat.), White Lady (Pat.) ..... each $1.50
Blue Girl Supreme, Blushing Maiden, Dupont Blue, Dupont Lavender Pink, Pink Beauty Supreme (Pat.) ..... each $2.50
Add 50¢ packing and postage on orders less than -5.00. We pay postage on all orders over $5.00. Order today, send check or money rder. (No C.O.D,) VIRDANS PLAST TONIC, $1.00 postpaid. Makes Violets Bloom. (West of Miss. River $1.25 postpaid).

VIRDANS FARMS BOX 123-L
PHELPS, NEW YORK

THE SECRETARY REPORTS

The third annual busines meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. was called to order on April 30, 1949 at the Cincinnati Club, Race at 8th Street, Cincinnati, Ohio with 181 members present.

An operating budget for the calendar year was decided upon, and the Treasurer's report was accepted and authorized published in the magazine. Mr. Gottshall's report was as folows:

FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FOR THE PERIOD
April 30, 1948 to April 30, 1949

Balance in the Treasury, April 30, 1948	$2,475.15
Outstanding Check #26	2.21
Total	$2,477.36
Income	
Membership Dues	$8,151.66
Sale of Back Issues of Magazine	124.10
Sale of Advertising Space	143.00
Registration Fees 1948 Convention	1o5.17
Total Income	$8,573.93
	$11,051.29
EXPENDITURES	
1948 Convention	$ 222.07
1949 Convention	35.10
Postage	463.90
Stationery and Supplies	423.99
Telephone and Telegraph	140.07
Miscellaneous	323.46
Publishing and Mailing Magazine	3,073.22
Total Expenditures	$4,681.81
Balance in Treasury April 30, 1949	$6,369.48

District Vice-Presidents for the year 1950 were introduced.

Region 1. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Mass., Conn., Rhode Island, and New York.
Mrs. A. H. Farnham
1803 Turnpike Street
North Andover, Massachusetts.

Region 2. Penna., New Jersey, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, and Virginia.
Mrs. R. J. Schadewald
7 Lexington Ave.
Havertown, Penna.

Region 3. North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Miss., and Tenn.
Mrs. R. R. Blackburn
404 Montlieu Ave
High Point, N. C.

Region 4. Ky., Indiana, Mich., Ohio, and Illinois
Mrs. Earl Mutchener
606 Richmond Ave.
Richmond, Ind.

Region 5. Wisconsin, Minn., Sorth Dakota, and South Dakota.
Mrs. A. H. Adams
3611 Garfield Street
Minneapolis, Minn.

Region 6. Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, and Kansas.
Mrs. Ferne Keller
1223 East Oak Park Drive
Des Moines, Iowa

Region 7. Arkansas, Louisiana, Okla., and Texas.
Mrs. Banks McDowell
2440 East 14th Place
Tulsa 4. Okla

Region 8. New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and Utah.
Mrs. Clifford Darrow
917 Colorado Ave.
Glenwood Springs, Colo.

Region 9. Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho.
Mrs. P. H. Scully
510 Kearney Street
Laramie, Wyoming.

Region 10. Washington, Oregon, Nevada, and Calif.
Mrs. C. H. Harris
757 Athens Blvd.
Los Angeles 44, Calif.

Congratulations were extended by the President to Mrs. Arthur Radtke and her fine committee for the splendid way in which they had managed the many details of the convention. A special vote of thanks was given to Mrs. J. W. Freed for her generosity in making the attractive violet badges for the delegates to the Convention.

Mr Boyce Edens, chairman of the Registration Committee. explained the purpose of his committee, and gave an instructive report on the work of classifying and registering new varieties of African Violets.

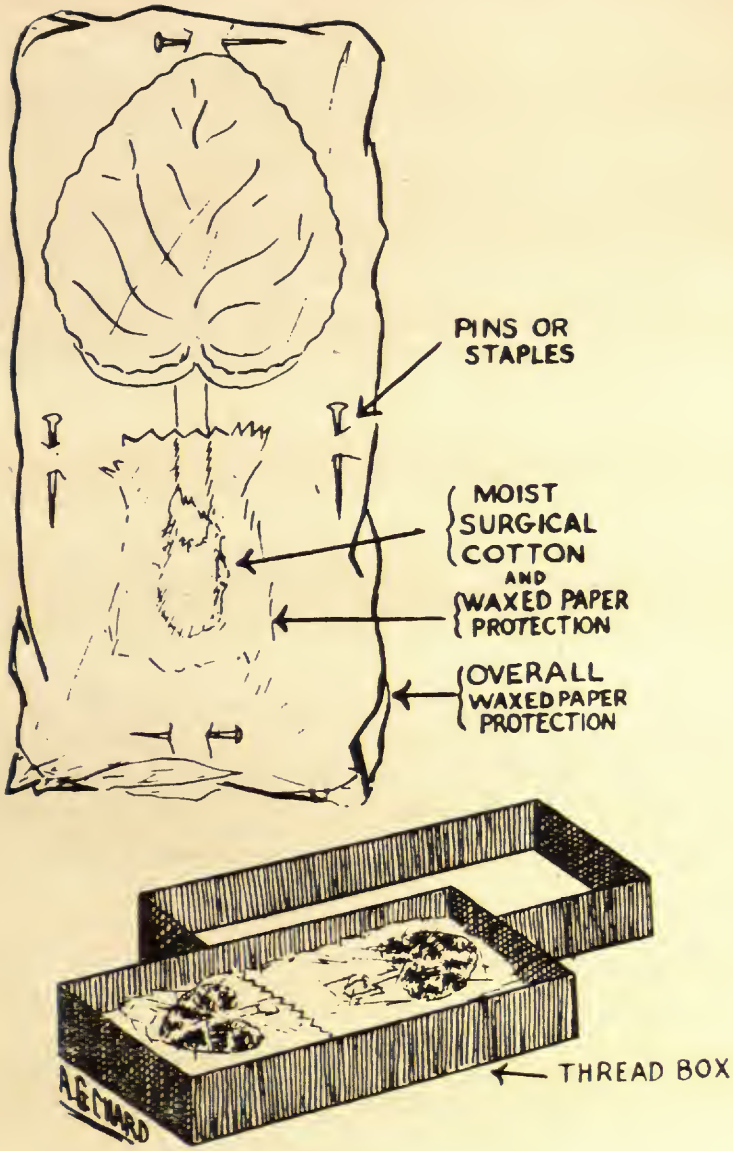
On recommendation of the Board of Directors the Society voted that the President appoint a committee for the re-writing of the By-Laws. Mrs. Arthur Radtke was appointed Chairman of this Committee. Also approved was a Committee on Awards.

Mrs. Robert Wright announced that the Board of Directors had accepted Mrs. R. J. Schadewald's invitation to the Society to hold the 1950 convention in Philadelphia, Penna. It was unanimously accepted by those present.

Following this came the election of Officers. Officers chosen to take office January 1, 1950 are:

President - Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Vice-President - Mr. William Merkel, Second Vice-President - Mrs. C. H. Harris, Recording Sec. - Mrs. Martin Wangburg, Corresponding Sec. - Mr. Floyd Johnson, Treasurer - Mr. Warren Gottshall.

Standing- Mr. Gottshall, Merkel, Johnson, Seated- Mrs. Wangburg, Harris and Radtke.



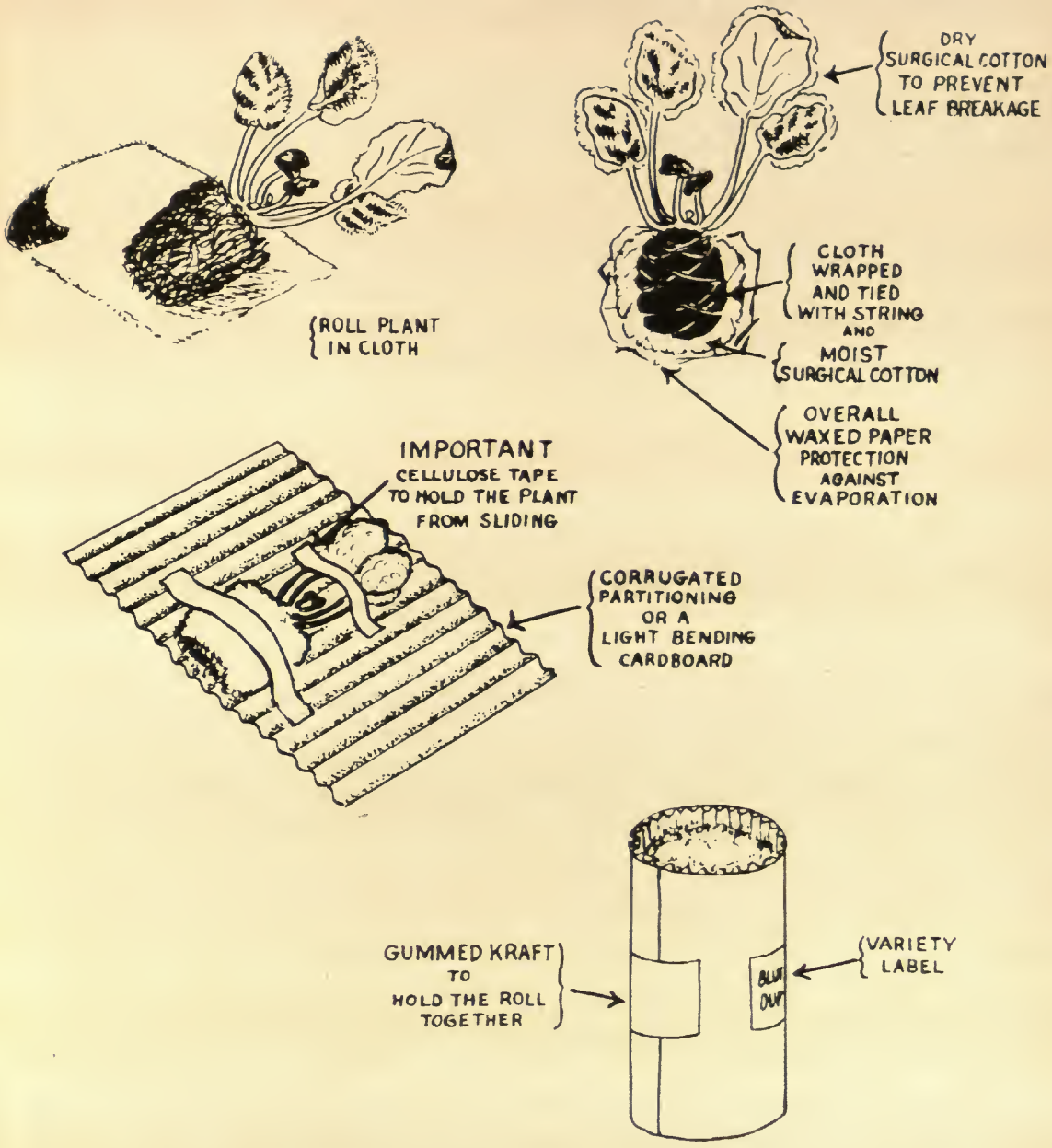
VIOLETS BY PARCEL POST

Ruth Sillers

(Illustrations by Arthur Chard)

My violets are a source of great pleasure, and I look forward to each new one to add to my rapidly increasing collection. Our postman always receives a warm welcome at my door, and I can hardly wait to open the package and examine each new plant and leaf. Tho' WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT, when it has been poorly packed!

Most of us have our own special way in preparing parcels for the mail. Empty sewing thread boxes, often obtainable at dry-good stores, make excellent containers for packing leaves. The end of the petiole should be wrapped in moist cotton; then a piece of waxed paper covering the cotton to hold in the moisture. The entire leaf and petiole should be wrapped in another piece of waxed paper and fastened securely with pins or staples. If you are fortunate enough to have Fermate, it is well to dust the end of the stem to protect it from disease.



When plants are to be shipped, they should be removed from their pots and the roots (with a ball of soil) wrapped in a piece of cloth held in place with thread or string. (Evergreens and small trees are transplanted in much the same way). A piece of wet cotton around the material will give sufficient moisture. Of course, waxed paper should then be wrapped around the cotton so as to prevent evaporation of the moisture. Dry cotton around the leaves will protect and keep them from being broken or bruised. The plant is then ready to be taped firmly with strips of cellulose to a piece of cardboard, pliable enough to roll and securely fasten. Cigar boxes are nice containers for shipping small plants. After carefully placing each package in the box, add enough filler (excelsior, shredded paper, etc.) to keep the individual plants from moving. It is well to shake the box to make certain of no unfilled space.

Another matter of importance is to securely label each variety, whether a leaf or plant. If done with pencil it will be unaffected by moisture. It is also advisable to record on your parcel "Plants - Perishable" and take the precaution of mailing it "Special Handling". This small additional fee assures one a quicker and safer journey. Avoid shipping in extreme weather.

GROWING 'EM OUTSIDE

Aletha Sturdivan

As growing flowers has always been my hobby, and, knowing how most of them respond to the fresh humid atmosphere, I thought I would try my luck at growing a few African violets outdoors.

After a winter's blooming - usually in inadequately ventilated homes - many of our plants seem to go into the doldrums. They take on a tired, wornout look and frequently stop putting out active growth and blooms. Some rejuvenating action on the collector's part is usually required. Most other houseplants are given new life by plunging them into the flower borders of our gardens; so, taking courage in hand, I ventured into the yard with a few African violets.

My "Jungle Greenhouse", as named by many visitors who have seen it, is merely the protection afforded by two huge barberry bushes, — planted about twenty-seven years ago when the house was built. These bushes are located, one about five feet from the North side of the house and the other about three feet from the West end of the house. The bushes have never been trimmed or thinned since our residence so they partially shut off the hot sun from this corner of the garden. However, when I decided upon this location for my violet experiment, I had to trim back the low hanging branches, as they were too thick to even place a pot beneath them.

Beneath the bushes the ground was soft and "composty" from rotting leaves and berries that had been collecting for years. Five or six small pots containing our older and more common varieties were pushed into this covering so they would not tip over to easily and also in an effort to keep the roots damp and cool. This was done on the 1st of July, as Iowa is colder than most southern states and does not really warm up until about this time of the year. After about two weeks in this location and after a few good rains, the plants took on a decided "new look". This success prompted me to try a large Red Head that was supposedly resting after a long winter of blooms. The plant fairly burst into more and brighter blooms than it had ever had previously. Needless to say, it did not stay there for a visitor "simply had to have it".

I had had proof enough so, with the aid of a large tray, about 150 plants were carried out to the "jungle". Seedlings, still covered with glass, made the trip as did all the leaves in propagation. New babies seemed to appear after every rain - proving they need plenty of moisture, warmth, and very little bright light. Visitors, and prospective purchasers, looked utterly amazed when informed that the plants were all outside.

During a normal season, plants outside require very little extra watering and I gave them no extra feedings. Like everything else there are a few disadvantages; first, they get rather dirty from the rains splashing the soil on the foliage (I usually bring them inside during a good rain that washes them fresh and green); and secondly, a few little angle worms get into the pots, if no precautions are taken. I have since learned to set the pots on ashes, which has so far eliminated the worm invasion. Even after these obstacles, I knew I was well repaid, for their size and quantity could no longer be accommodated in the quarters provided in the house during the winter and an ad had to be run in the local paper to dispose of the surplus.

This year the plants will again be moved into their "jungle greenhouse" without apprehension.

A BUSY HOUSEWIFE'S VIOLETS

I use a little bit of sand
Vermiculite and such —
Some very nice woods earth
And bone meal, but not much!
A little bit of phosphate too
Is helpful I have found —
Charcoal also, I've been told
Will sweeten up the ground!
My hours are busy, and so you see
I haven't time my pots to boil
I haven't time to fumigate
To sift the sand, and bake the soil.
Perhaps my violets know this,
And in the midnight hours
Conspire to overcome all foes
And fill my home with flowers!

Juanita Empson.

African Violets

Send for My Free Illustrated
1949 Spring Catalog

It contains complete descriptions of all my varieties, including many of my own introductions. Several varieties are illustrated; catalog is packed with valuable information. Start this delightful hobby this season — write today!

MRS. JENNIE SPOUTZ
13310 State Fair Ave. Dept. 10
Detroit 5, Mich.
Quality Plants — Quality Packing
Prices That Please
African Violets for Beginners
and Collectors

NO MORE FLIES

Emaline Andricks

I have been using cow manure (purchased from a local seed store) in my soil mixture for the past eight months. My Violets seem to like it very much, for they have been nice to me, sending up buds anywhere from six to nine months from the time that I put the parent leaf to root. However, my troubles have come from the little black flies that hatch from it. I consulted a man at the insect spray department, and he told me to use one teaspoon nicotine sulphate to one pint of water and pour it around the roots. I soaked up the soil good with the solution. He also said to sterilize the soil I used next time with boiling water. The nicotine sulphate solution helped some, but it did not seem to get them all, so on some I used it twice at three week intervals. It did thin them down, but was kind of an expensive kill.

Next time I put the soil mixture into 4" & 6" pots and saturated it with boiling water, Now I told myself "no more flies." After a few days I potted up more violets only to find, in perhaps two weeks time, those pots hatching flies. I was told that to paint the pots on the outside with "Pestroy" would help. Not having that, I used "Flit". With a couple of applications of this, if they seem too persistent, and patience, they hatch and crawl out, flv around and die eventually. I find dozens of them in the lamp bowls and around the pots dead.

I sprayed with N. N. O. R. This, I find, is a most effective spray for violets, but it did leave brown spots on the undersides of the foliage, where evidently these little flies had nibbled and the spray turned the places brown. This spoiled the foliage, so that was out. I have laid moth crystals on the soil; that has very little effect.

I have heard that if the manure is well rotted, the flies will not hatch. Some say even cow manure tea hatches the flies; someone else said they baked it, and the eggs still hatched.

I have never lost any plants from this, but I surely would like to find the answer to their certain doom. If I didn't have a very patient, and good natured family, surely they would scold about mama's many wee visitors flitting by their ears, yes, and even occasionally lighting in the butter dish. Can anyone help?

COLOR

Helen Van Pelt Wilson

(Published thru the courtesy of M. Barrows & Co., Inc., publishers of Miss Wilson's revised edition of "African Violets",)

The color of saintpaulias is a not too constant quality. In fact, it seems to me after we decide saintpaulias have a range from deep, intense purples through blue-violets, wine-reds, and pink-violets to pink, blush, and white that we have about told the color story. To give each variety a symbol and place it exactly on a finely graded chart is hardly possible or worthwhile. I have tried this method with several charts and at different seasons. It was a frustrating business. The saintpaulia which today is Red Violet 4, may after a week of cloudy weather be nearer Red Violet 6! The variety which in one soil is blue under more alkaline conditions may be orchid.

Perhaps it is best to think of color as a relative characteristic - - Viking will always be deeper than Blue Eyes, but the degree of variance may not be constant. In view of saintpaulia variability, I have removed the color symbols originally used in this book and am describing colors only with words. My color charting is for tentative guidance only, although it was developed from an actual sequence of flowers picked from plants in full bloom and arranged on a table according to gradation of color.

HELEN POCHUREK SPECIALIZING IN AFRICAN VIOLETS

14225 McCracken Road -:- Garfield Heights 5, Ohio

Introducing Tunia's Cleveland Indian - a dark red, named in honor of the Cleveland Champion Baseball team. Also Amazons in Amethyst, Blushing Maiden, Sailor Boy, Norseman, White Lady. Merkel's Giant Blue, Low Cluster Blue, Mrs. Boles and Tunia's Big Boy at .50 each or 7 for $3.00 Periwinkle, Blue Knight, Brilliant, Old Lace, Moire and Brown Dot at .35 each. Add .50 for postage and packing on orders of less than $3.00. Send stamped envelope for complete list of leaves and plants. Leaves of Tunia's Cleveland Indian 75¢ each.

POTTING, POTS, AND POTTING SOIL

Arthur G. Chard

PROPER TIME TO REPOT

The proper time to repot would seem to some to depend a great deal upon locality, i.e., the growers of African violets in the South would feel free to repot at any time during the year while those in the North would believe that potting should be confined to Spring and early Summer. Personally, I believe that the proper time to repot is designated by necessity instead of by season. By repotting I mean the term as defined by Helen Van Pelt Wilson in her book "The African Violet" in which she writes "Repotting - which may involve replacement of worn-out soil with a fresh mixture, the improvement of drainage conditions, and even some cutting back of the roots", as differing from "Shifting - the moving of a plant to the next, larger-sized container with a little more soil but the least possible disturbance".

Shifting can be accomplished at any time. The one main thing to remember in this procedure is to thoroughly moisten the soil in which the plant is growing beforehand so that it can be pushed out of the pot without any of it falling away from the roots. With this precaution even plants in bloom may be "shifted" without any damage to the blooms or set-back to the plant.

Repotting should be done as soon as necessary and requires only a few precautions. Naturally, a repotted plant is going to experience some shock, but the ultimate benefit to the plant will soon remedy this condition and in the long run helps more than a little, besides being the savior of a plant that might otherwise be lost. Plants that have been flowering faithfully all Winter may, by Spring or early Summer, begin to grow up so high at the crown that they look rather clumsy, or topheavy, and every time the pot is moved the plant does the "wiggles". As a treatment, follow, more or less, the rules set down for other plants that have become straggly or potbound. Turn over the pot and with your left hand over the "lip" catch the plant and ball of soil as you gently push it out from the bottom with a pencil, or any other object that will go into the drainage hole, with your right hand. Remove as much of the soil as possible from the roots by working it between your fingers. (This will cause less bruising of the roots than knocking it against something or shaking it, as the entire crown may be torn away from the roots with this procedure). Then, with a clean knife or scissors, cut away a good portion of the roots so that the plant when repotted can be set lower into the new pot so that the long stem below the crown can be set beneath the potting mixture. Balance your plant next by removing some of the older, out-side leaves so that the plant will be in proportion to the remaining roots. In this way the roots will not have quite as much work to do until they become acclimated and new growth begins. Then repot with a fresh soil mixture but do not fill the pot too full - rather leave room for a later addition of a nicely fertilized "top-dressing". This is really a "shock treatment", for it will soon shock the plant into renewed growth and prolong the life of the plant, perhaps indefinitely.

The procedure for plants suffering from crown-rot cannot, perhaps, be covered under "repotting" but it is worth giving a thought at this time. Crown-rot is the result we all experience sooner or later when we become too lavish with the watering pot. This condition may become so exaggerated that the crown can eventually be lifted off from the top of the potting mixture. In the case of rot, be sure to remove all of the rotted portions, even if it becomes necessary to cut away practically all of the crown but a few leaves. If any of the "brown" is left the rot will spread. Get a fresh pot, or thoroughly clean the old one, and over the drainage hole place some "crocking" and above this some sphagnum moss and fill with vermiculite. The moss will prevent the mica from leaving the pot when it is set aside to drain. The base of the newly operated on crown may be dipped into "Rootone", but this is not absolutely necessary. When the pot is filled, gently push the plant, or what remains of it, into the vermiculite; and, if small enough, a tumbler or glass jar can be placed over the top. Set it aside until the next day, or at least a few hours, before watering to permit the "scar" to heal. The pot should then be placed in water and allowed to remain until completely moistened. Do not rewater until the vermiculite seems dry and do not expose to too strong a light but keep rather back from the window. To test whether the vermiculite needs watering insert the point of a pencil. If you can push it about like so much dry cornmeal, it needs water, but, if particles of the mica adhere to the pencil, the addition of water is not necessary. A plant in soil this dry would surely perish, but it must be remembered that moisture as well as air is confined within the cells of the vermiculite itself. If glass is placed over the plant, it should be removed occasionally to admit fresh air and to cut down on the accumulating humidity.

SIZE OF POTS

The proper size of pots is rather a delicate subject as there are many and diversified opinions on the topic. Personally I like a pot in keeping with the proportions of the plant. Some state that Saintpaulias do not need to be pot-bound to bloom but rather like plenty of foot room. Perhaps this is correct but the fact remains that the same size plant in a small pot will bloom before the one in a large pot. True, it may also make suckers,

but I am rather loathe to search about in a huge pot to find the plant. Too much pot detracts from the beauty of any plant. The preference is for a 3 or 4 inch pot, but if a plant looks exceptionally rugged and has reached a spread of 8 or 9 inches it can be put into a 5 or 6 inch standard pot - though the azalea pots are perhaps better as they are less hard to water. However, for a person with a large collection, it is preferable to keep the plant sizes on a more restricted scale. This can be done by starting new plants and either selling or giving away the old plant; or, by trimming and repotting the originals to keep them at a smaller size. In this case, smaller pots have a tendency to keep many varieties from maturing to their full extent.

POTTING SOIL

The potting "soil" for rooting leaves and/or suckers in my case is vermiculite, and I find that the best leaves for rooting are the smaller leaves toward the center of the plant . . . but not so small as to have no petiole. A leaf which has a petiole perhaps 1½ inches long is about ideal. I also find that leaves which have nobules (that would naturally form roots if one were to cover soil over that portion) root quickest. Break the leaf off at the crown (it is not necessary to cut it again) and put it into dry vermiculite at a depth of about ¾ of an inch and then place a glass over it. Use anything up to a 3 or 4 inch pot and fill as above noted for plants to be rerooted that have suffered from crown-rot. Use dry vermiculite as the cutting is more easily inserted before the mica has been watered. The pot can be filled about ¾ full and when the plants come up given regular weekly waterings with a liquid fertilizer. Usually, after several waterings, the vermiculite loses that coarse sawdust-like look and begins to appear more light and airy. The plantlets are permitted to grow undisturbed for quite a few weeks and then removed, all but the largest which is NEVER removed but given regular feedings with the liquid fertilizer. After a time, I put on a little top soil which is a mixture of peat, vermiculite, dirt and some cow manure. The loose root runs in the vermiculite, with a top feeding once in awhile, which seems to be ideal for my violets.

A potting soil containing woods soil has been found to be unsatisfactory here in the East as it generally contains a sort of fungus. This fungus may be the cause of root-rot or the excess acidity may be to blame. This soil should never be used unless a fungicide has first been added. Neither should finely sifted soil be used as it "packs" in the pot preventing natural and luxurious growth of the roots. Many of us have received plants from greenhouses apparently growing in pure "mud" or heavy clay and they look beautiful but we soon find that in our homes they deteriorate and seem to "shrink". It should be remembered that in the greenhouse the moisture content of the soil is kept at the same degree of saturation - without water-logging - as is the humidity of the air. This saturation keeps the soil lighter than if it were allowed to become dry. Should it dry it takes on an arid, baked look and the addition of water then only tends to make it "heavy", as our homes do not have the ideal and controlled conditions of the greenhouse. Keep your own potting mixtures as light as possible by the addition of peat, vermiculite and possibly sand for drainage. The mixture should be able to hold a lot of moisture without becoming "soggy". When soil is "sifted", the particles are broken down too finely and will pack too close and hard in the pot. A coarser soil is much more preferable to free movement and development of the roots, BUT, remember never to permit excessive dryness of any soil. Should this happen to such an extent that the leaves droop limply over the sides of the pot you may find that they never straighten up and will eventually rot because of being in constant contact with the moisture in the pot itself and secreted from the sides and "lip".

Why not a growing medium, or at least, base, of vermiculite? I know of plants that have never been in anything but vermiculite and have grown to large proportions and carried many and large blooms. Neither had they been given more nutriments than plants grown in a potting mixture and regularly fed. Perhaps the future will prove the benefits of hydroponics in African violets. Certainly vermiculite is cleaner and disease free and the addition of bone meal and regular feedings of liquid fertilizers may be the blessing of every Saintpaulia grower. The excess salts deposited by commercial hydroponics can easily be washed from the vermiculite by occasional "rinsing" from above. The raising of violets in vermiculite alone is still in the experimental stage but may yet prove the answer to all our problems by being the least expensive and most satisfactory.

Not all back issues of the magazine are now in print.

Requests for these must be made on penny post cards and you will be notified which ones are available.

Do not send money until you are notified.

— Editor

CLUB NEWS

Ocala, Florida Chapter

The Ocala, Florida African Violet club, which was organized about a year ago, hold their meeting on the first Wednesday after the first Tuesday of the month.

,This group presently has a membership of 15, with the following officers:

President, Mrs. Fred E. Landt, Sr.
Vice-Pres., Mrs. B. F. Shealy
Secretary, Mrs. C. F. O'Berry
Treas., Mrs. John D. Williams, Sr.

Springfield Missouri Chapter

The Springfield Mo. Chapter of the African Violet Society held its annual election of officers on November 16, 1948.

The new officers were installed by Mrs. J. D. Armstrong and were as follows:

President, Mrs. W. H. McBride
Vice-Pres., Miss Esther Bustrin
Secretary, Mrs. Benton Linder
Treasurer, Mrs. M. J. Hammond
Corres. Sec'y., Mrs. Charles Denham

We are proud of the enthusiasm and interest of our Society, and of our membership, which now totals 77. The outstanding project for 1949 thus far was a display of Violets at the Community Hobby Show.

Chattanooga Chapter

A window garden at te Pine Breeze Sanatorium, the main project of the Chattanooga African Violet Society, was started last March from plants donated by members. The garden was arranged by Mrs. M. D. Chapman, assisted by Mrs. Horace Humphreys, Sr., Mrs. W. C. Taylor, and the nurses at the sanatorium.

At present the society, of which Mrs. W. W. Cox is president, is engaged in a classification course. A plant naming contest is held at the close of each meeting and the winner receives a flowering African Violet plant as a reward.

The local society, which now has a membership of 90, was organized on June 11, 1947, by Mrs. Patric J. Crowe for the purpose of the culture and propagation of the plants.

The society has sponsored three outstanding shows and made a day's pilgrimage to homes of African Violet collectors in the city. An al fresco meeting was held at the home of Mayor and Mrs. Hugh P. Wasson on Missionary Ridge.

The first annual spring luncheon was held a year ago when Mrs. Robert Wright of Knoxville, editor of the national society's publication and elective president of the African Violet Society of America, was guest speaker. The first anniversary tea was held last June at Mrs. Crowe's home on Missionary Ridge.

South Bay Chapter #3

The South Bay Chapter #3, which includes Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach and Manhattan Beach, California, was organized on March 22, 1949, with 6 charter members.

The meeting was held in the Redondo Beach Community Hall with Mrs. Clarissa Harris, region #10 director, and Mrs. Wanda Jones, President of the Los Angeles #1 Chapter, present for installation of the new officers.

Officers elected and installed are:

President, Mrs. Della Mollenkopf
Vice-Pres. Program Chrm., Mrs. Minetta Holman
Secretary, Mrs. Margaret Fenn
Treasurer, Mrs. Margaret Johnson
Plant Chrm., Mrs. Kate Corubleth

After the installation, Mrs. Harris gave an interesting and informative talk and answered many questions. Refreshments were then served.

African Violets for the Veterans

The Long Beach Saintpaulia Society has undertaken the voluntary project of creating interest in African Violets at the Long Beach Navy Hospital. The Society hopes to present a blooming plant to each veteran who is interested. The first 25 plants were given to the boys in the tumor and heart wards.

The Society hopes the answers to many questions will be found in the literature donated which consists of a subscription to the African Violet Magazine; an African Violet Handbook by Mary Margaret Odom; and an illustrated book, African Violets, by Helen Van Pelt Wilson.

A Hobby Class will be conducted for the veterans who are interested.

Harvey Cox, a disabled Veteran of World War 1, who is an African Violet Hobbyist who has contributed generously to this project, was presented a life membership in the Long Beach Saintpaulia Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute plants to this project, contact Mrs. L. D. Thalheimer, 1831 Mc Kenzie St., Long Beach 5, Calif., president of the Long Beach Chapter.

Alhambra Branch of the Violet Society

The Alhambra Community Chapter of the African Violet Society, Inc., held its initial meeting at the Story Park Clubhouse on February 24, 1949. 68 interested growers attended this meeting; 17 joined the National Society at this time.

The new officers are:

President, Mrs. J. Ernest Mackey
1st Vice-Pres., Mrs. Mary Walters
2nd Vice-Pres., Mrs. Margaret Schoengost
Secretary, Mrs. Bessie Skadion
Treasurer, Mrs. Marion Reubel

Mrs. Clarrisa Harris, regional director of region #10, gave a very informative talk on Violets and an open discussion followed.

..Missouri Valley African Violet Society..

A group of Violet enthusiasts from Atchison, Kansas, and St. Joseph, Missouri met March 30, 1949 at the Pennant Cafeteria in St. Joseph for a 6 o'clock dinner, and organized The Missouri Valley African Violet Society. Mrs. Emma Pawleson of St. Joseph presided as chairman of the meeting.

The following officers were elected:
President, Mrs. Bird Barnes
Vice-Pres., Mrs. F. M. Richardson
2nd Vice-Pres., Mrs. Bernard E. Ulrich
Secretary, Mrs. Harvey Hayes
Treasurer, Mrs. Luther O'Neill
2nd Treasurer, Mr. Bernard E. Ulrich
Corresp. Sect. Mrs. Milton Bumbacher

There was a round table discussion, questions and answers of problems pertaining to the care and propagation of African Violets. Future meetings will be held at the Pennant Cafeteria in St. Joseph on the 4th Tuesday of each month.

Lewistown, Pennsylvania Society

The 2nd Monday of the month has been chosen as meeting night for the newly organized chapter in Lewistown, Pa.

The following officers were elected:
President, Mrs. Homer C. Foltz
Vice-Pres., Mrs. Leslie Heck
Secy. & Treas., Mrs. James Helmbold

Although this group is small in size, their enthusiasm is great. Their first meeting time was spent in the planting of seed which they intend to watch grow, repot and discuss at future meetings.

Violet Society of Humboldt, Tenn.

The African Violet Society of Humboldt, Tenn., was organized in September, 1948. Mrs. John E. Hooper, founder of the Memphis Society, and Mrs. W. C. Hope, President, assisted in the formation of this organization. Five ladies attended and the following officers were elected:
President, Mrs. John R. Boyd, Jr.
1st Vice-Pres., Mrs. J. V. Butler
2nd Vice-Pres., Mrs. E. L. Phillips
Secretary, Mrs. F. D. Hamilton
Treasurer, Mrs. Vernon Carter

Since that time, 18 members have enrolled, a charter of organization drawn up and several needed chairmen named. Regular monthly meetings are held and a bulletin published on the culture of the Violet.

Battle Creek Exhibit

The Battle Creek, Michigan, African Violet Society plans a Violet Show to be held on April 21. The show will be open to the general public and many of the newer varieties will be on display. Professor Milden and Evan Roberts of the Michigan State College will be the judges.

Officers of the group are:
President, Phyllis Ferrall
Vice-Pres., Mable Wilkes
Secretary, Elsie Walton
Treasurer, Dorothy Haffenden
Corres. Secy., Edith Theis
Publicity, Mable Bailey

Richmond, Virginia Club

From Richmond, Virginia, comes word of the newly organized Richmond African Violet Society, with 38 members.

The following are officers and committee chairman:
President, Mrs. Gibson C. Phillips
1st Vice-Pres., Mrs. Alva Tate
2nd V.-Pres., Mr. Frank Brunton
Recording Sect. Mrs. R. Mc I. Frazer
Corres. Sect., Mrs. G. H. Frank
Treasurer, Mrs. G. H. Reid
Program, Mrs. Milton Eike
Publicity, Mrs. F. H. Norvell
Membership, Mrs. John Pangola
Hospitality, Mrs. D. W. Ferguson
Telephone, Mrs. G.L. Mac Kay

Minneapolis Violet Society

January 4, 1949, was the first meeting date for the 12 members of the Minneapolis, Minnesota, African Violet Club. With addition of 4 members of the Minnesota Garden Flower Society, committees were selected and plans made for a non-competitive Violet show to be held in April.

Officers for this club are:
President, Mrs. A. G. Alden
Secy. & Treas., Mrs. A. H. Adams

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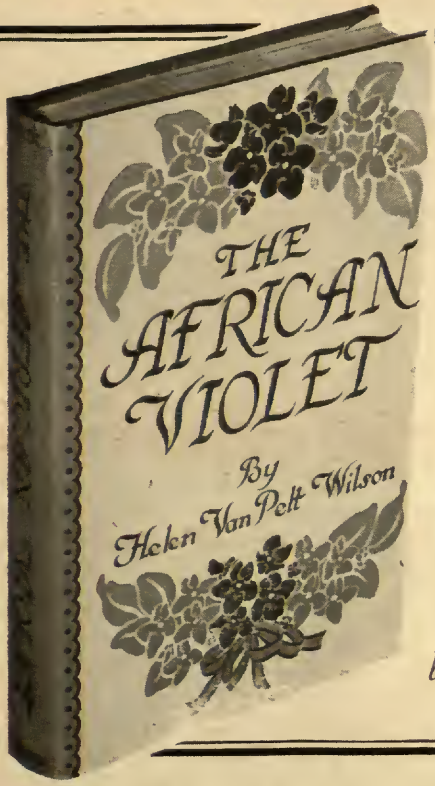

The African Violet

by HELEN VAN PELT WILSON

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TO REGISTER PLANTS

Boyce M. Edens, Chairman,
Committee on Registration
2694 Lenox Rd. S. E., Atlanta, Ga.

The Editor Says:

Dear Members: An extra special effort will be made to have the December magazine on its way before the Christmas rush begins. Do give your copy time to reach you . . . before writing in about it.

I had hoped for more responses on our "lost members" than I have had to date. Won't you read the list over, and let me hear from you? I am most anxious to send them their magazines. Please help.

A continued article on Gesneriaceae by Louise Smouse will begin in the next issue. Daisy Jones will have some interesting facts for you on the method, success, ease and satisfaction of using chemical pots. Jean Hilliard will tell you about growing saintpaulias in bubble bowls and photographs of special arrangements from the Memphis and Shelby County Society show will be featured. As usual our regular staff will have their customary fine articles.

So until December!

Most sincerely,
Alma Wright

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CONVENTION PICTURES NOT IN MAGAZINE

4 Luncheon Pictures — Nos. 18, 4, 13, 15
6 of Plant Exhibit — Nos. 9, 10, 12, 16. 17, 8
1 of Bulletin Board — No. 6.

These pictures may be had for $1.50 each. Order direct from Metzger & Metzger, 3302 Montgomery Road, Cincinnati 7, Ohio.

— Editor

The Presidents Message

Growth and Progress Report

Growth and progress are two essentials in the forward-march of any sound organization program such as ours. Certainly we have grown in sturdy stature, slowly at times but steadily, since we started our forward-march of progress in November 1946. Then, there were ten interested and enthusiastic Organization Members present in Atlanta, Georgia, when the Society was established. During the two succeeding years the membership has grown at the rate of well over a thousand new members each year. A recent count of our membership, which changes from day to day in number, places the total at 3,200.

Accompanying this issue of the Magazine is the First Supplement issued which contains a list of our entire membership at June 30, 1949. We sincerely hope that this list will serve as a helpful and friendly introduction of each one of our members to all the rest. We hope, too, every reliable grower and dealer of African violets will make their latest retail catalogs and price lists available to each one of the members. Naturally we are gratified to be able at this time to print this list, in geographical form, and we are confident it will be helpful in other ways to our members and advertisers.

Another progressive step forward in our progress is the establishment, June 1949, of our Registration Service which becomes a permanent service of the Society. It will be conducted by a Committee on Registration with Mr. Boyce M. Edens as Chairman. I unhesitatingly predict that this new service of the Society will do much towards helping to smooth-out some of the wrinkles that have gathered in the hitherto uncontrolled maze of African violet names. We seek the hearty corporation of everyone in the operation of this service.

Recent information, compiled on the operation of our Homing Pigeons, indicated more than a thousand different people throughout the Country participating as correspondents to the Pigeons. Taking cognizance of the fact that a considerable number of the participants in the various homing pigeons are not members of the Society, our Board of Directors has authorized that new participants in all Homing Pigeons, After July 31, 1949, shall be members of the Society. This action, taken in the interest of the entire membership of African Violet Society of America, is certainly another step forward in our progress.

A further progressive step has been taken by our Board of Directors in the appointment of a special committee to re-draft our By-laws, so as to bring them more in line with the numerous newly-developed needs of the Society. Mrs. Arthur Radtke is Chairman of this Committee. She will welcome your co-operation in this task.

During the comparative short time the Society has been in operation it has become increasingly apparent that a system of appropriate awards should be set up that would recognize improved types of African violets that are introduced from year to year. Then, too, it has developed that similar awards should be made to those who render really outstanding meritorious service in the cause of the African violet. Our Board of Directors has authorized the appointment of a Committee on Awards to make recommendations governing all such awards the Society may make in the future.

The resignation of Elsie Freed as Conductress of the Homing Pigeons has been accepted with sincere regret. Her services to the Society both in the establishment and conduct of the Pigeons has been exceedingly valuable both to the Society and to the hundreds of individuals who particpate in the Pigeons.

We acknowledge again, with expressions of deepest appreciation, the magificent services of our genial, capable President-elect, Mrs. Arthur Radtke, in the organization and conduct of the past two Annual Conventions and Exhibits, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Cordially,

Your President,

Alma Wright.

RAISING QUALITY AFRICAN VIOLETS

H. G. Harvey

(Mr. Harvey kindly gave the editor this copy of his talk at the convention.)

I am here representing the little fellow in this African Violet procession. There are a lot of little fellows, men and women, in this big hobby of ours. It is sort of like Abraham Lincoln's story about the poor people, — the Lord must love the little fellows, because he makes so many of them. But you do not have to feel sorry for them. The quality of Violets raised in kitchen windows is traditional, and people try to explain part of it, but more important, to my way of thinking, is the fact that the housewife watches those plants in the kitchen, she studies them, tends to them, gets to know their likes and dislikes; in short, she puts in the close and continuous attention that is the fundamental basis of quality raising of violets.

So let's run through some of the essentials of African Violet culture from the point of view of quality rather than quantity production.

LIGHT.

The first thing I want to talk about is light, because that seems to me to be the most important and the most baffling element of the entire subject. Three times in the past three years, I have been forced to move my violets to entirely new locations, and I am bruised, battered and sore from trying to settle upon locations where the lighting is satisfactory. My violets, too, are bruised, battered and sore. I, like you, have raised violets in every exposure there is, North, South, East and West, and I know that it can be done with proper adjustment of curtains and distance from the window. But I can not look at a place today and say in advance what should be done to make that place satisfactory for the violets. But the violet knows. Put one in there, and in a week, it will tell you whether the lighting is satisfactory or not. The trouble is, that we do not believe what it is saying, if it is contrary to our pre- conceived ideas. We argue with it, and in the meanwhile our violet gets sicker and sicker, until we have a serious condition on our hands. Yellow leaves mean too much light, and if we pay attention to the first lightening of the leaves, we have time to do something about it. Dark green leaves - beautiful foliage - but few or no flowers mean too little light. Incidentally, the lighting that is best for flowers is too much for the leaves, and lighting that is best for the leaves is not enough for the flowers so, that the in between compromise is a quite narrow band. I say that any direct, raw sunlight is not good, although the plants will accept a little weak, morning sunlight unscreened, without too much protest, but mine have convinced me differently.

I have a location now, which my violets say they will accept, although they consider it a little on the sunny side, and they have warned me that any increase in light will be objectionable. Well, here it is spring, with the summer coming on and the sun getting higher in the sky every day. So my problem is to measure the illumination I have now, and to watch it to see if it increases any. Now, our photographic friends have a light meter that they use to determine how much exposure to give a film. The standard way of doing this is by measuring what they call the reflected light; they point the meter at the picture just like they do the camera, and read what they get. But the real high brows, going in for color photography, where you must be accurate, have hit upon what they call the "incident light" method. They put an attachment on the eye of their meter, to sort of average out the light, and then they put the meter right where the picture is, and then read the pointer. That method, whether it is best for the picture maker or not, is just what I want to tell how much light my violet is getting. I believe it is even better than the reading obtained with the regular lighting engineer's foot candle meter, since I think the integration or averaging out is better, although the figures you get are entirely different. So, the trick is to get one of your photographic friends to assume he is going to take a picture of your violet, and get his light meter reading by the "incident light" method. Then have him tell you what that reading is, and quit there, instead of twisting his dials and calculating the thing to come up with the aperture and exosure time. The trouble is, you will have to get him to do that four or five times during a sunny day, so you can get the maximum and the average reading.

I did that with my rather sunny location. I got 60 foot candles maximum, with an averae of 35. The average was from 8:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. Then I went over to my daughter's, and measured her location the same way. Now, her location is on the shady side, since she is putting great emphasis on foliage, trying to get as nearly perfect leaves as possible. Incidentally, she is the one who should be talking to you about raising quality violets instead of me, as she is doing a much better job than I am. Anyway, she had a maximum of 20 foot candles, with an average of 14. So, until I know better, I am going to say that a proper location for African Violets, as measured with a photographic light meter by the incident light method, will give a maximum reading of not over 60 foot candles, and an average value over an eight hour period of between 15 and 30. Neither of my locations had any direct sunlight at any time - by that, I mean that there was translucent material between the plants and the sun at all times - so it may be that my maximum can be exceeded for a short time without damage. Anyway, I am going home and cut down the average in my location from 35 to 20.

HUMIDITY

I have a working hypothesis on this humidity situation which may or may not be correct, but it gives the right answer. My theory is that the violet wants all the humidity it can get; it can't be too high. The trouble is, however, that the fungi and bacteria that cause the various sorts of rot - crown rot, stem rot, leaf rot and the like - also like a high humidity. The violet can stand a lower humidity than can the fungi, so the trick is to get all the humidity you can for the violet, without getting enough to encourage the fungi too much. Working from this, you come up with a value of humidity between 40% and 60%. Less than 40% is too dry for the violet, over 60% you are in danger of rot. This is for mature plants. Youngsters seem to be able to fight off the rots easier than the older ones; my experience seems to indicate that plants under a year old can take and enjoy humidities up to 70% and starting leaves like up to 80%, - that is why you put them in an aquarium.

So far, all is serene. If humidiguides were as accurate as thermometers, all would be sweetness and light on the humidity front. But they are not. I would very much like to give you my frank opinion of humidiguides, but I observe that there are a few ladies present today, and that imposes such a handicap on my expression of my unvarnished opinion that I guess I had better not start. The wet and dry bulb type is O.K. as far as continued accuracy is concerned. This is the thing that consists of two thermometers side by side, with a glass "hicky" underneath, from which a wick runs up to the bulb of one of the thermometers. You fill the glass with water, and it runs up the wick to keep the bulb of one of the thermometers wet. Then you blow an electric fan on this wet bulb to cool it off, and read the two temperatures, the wet bulb temperature and the dry temperature. Then you follow the directions, turning a cylinder full of numbers which is in the place between the two thermometers, reading the proper places, and come up with the relative humidity. That is all right, but it is a nuisance. Also, you cannot use it in the house where you are maintaining humidity by a pebble tray under your plants or something of the kind. This gives what Helen Van Pelt Wilson so poetically calls an "aura" of humidity surrounding your plants, and when you turn this electric fan loose, it tears that "aura" all to shreds.

So you have to use the dial type, where a pointer reads the per cent humidity directly, and right there your trouble begins. Those things won't stay accurate more than two months at the outside. Generally, they gradually get to reading lower and lower, until finally they will say you have 20% humidity at a time when everything is just dripping moisture. You have to recalibrate them. This is done by setting the dial type up along side the thermometer type, and getting the reading on both of them. I pry the front off of the dial type I have with a screw driver, so I can get at the back of it, where there is a little lever that will move the pointer until it reads correctly. The kid in your neighborhood who takes clocks apart and tinkers with the radios can do the same thing, or failing that, you can just memorize the difference and go by that. But a month or two later, you will have to do the same thing over again. However, this humidity thing is so important that it is well worth worrying about.

FERTILIZER

I regret to say that one has to use fertilizer to raise quality plants. The reason that I say "regret" is that fertilizers are dangerous. I believe that more plants have been ruined by injudicious application of fertilizers than have been helped by their judicious use. Nevertheless, for real good flowers, fertilizers must be used, so we might just as well start in, get our feet wet, and learn by hard experience what to do and what not to do. In fertilizer work, it is distinctly not true that "if a little is good, more is better". As a general rule, start off with one fourth of the application that the directions on the package recommends. If that seems to work, you can cautiously build up to about one half of the recommendation, but, if you go beyond that, you are on your own, and cannot hold me responsible. As another general rule, do not fertilize sick plants. Fertilizers are to make good plants better, not to make sick plants well. Also, young plants do not want fertilizer. I think it is a good idea not to use any booster fertilizer before the first blooms. In my personal technique, I do not fertilize until the plants are in four inch pots, which is an automatic way of not fertilizing until the plants are grown up and can take it.

The individual fertilizing technique must be worked out for each individual case. It depends upon the potting soil used and the method of watering. I am using a relatively deficient soil, one third woods dirt and 1/50 of the total volumn of sheep manure being the only elements in the soil that feed the plants. I am using top watering, so it is convenient for me to supply my fertilizer by dissolving it in the water. My plants crave phosphate like I crave strawberry shortcake. They also like potash very much, and Hyponex seems to be as good a source of potash as any I have found so far. They are not at all interested in nitrogen, probably because of the sheep manure in the soil. My fertilizing regime goes this way. One Saturday, I use B-1 vitamin solution, the "minimum dosage" recommended by the manufacturer. The next Saturday, I use superphosphate, ¼ teaspoon to a quart of water. The third Saturday, I use B-1 again, and the fourth Saturday it is Hyponex at the rate of ¼ teaspoonful to the quart. Then I start over again. There has to be a watering with plain water between each fertilization, primarily to wash out the excess of the previous fertilizer, since I do not want the stuff to pile up in the pots on me. This arrangement

seems to work for me. It is adapted to my top watering and to my relatively poor soil. It seems to work with bottom watering, although in this case, I substitute a thorough top watering, with plain water - really a flushing out of the pot - for one of the B-1 applications. However, this bottom watering is a new venture with me, and I have not tried it long enough to be able to say anything about it.

MISCELLANEOUS

There are a couple of minor but important points that I would like to discuss a bit. The first is suckers. Cut 'em off quick. I am committed to single crown plants. I am just built that way, I can't even talk about multiple crown plants! And I want the plants to grow the way I want them to, not the way they feel like doing. If you catch the suckers quickly, you can get rid of them before they effect the symmetry of the plant, and no harm is done. If they go too long, their removal leaves a gap that it takes months to correct. However, for many, even that is preferable to the confusion of a multiple crown. I have never divided a mature plant in my life. Sometimes, after a period of neglect (we all have them) the sucker leaves cut off were so big I could use them as leaf cuttings, and I have developed new plants from them. But a pair of long handled manicure scissors is a necessary tool for the African Violet grower, along with the tooth picks, hairpins, aluminum foil and cotton batting that we all use.

The other point is so elementary that I hesitate to mention it. Turn your plants. They grow toward the sun and will grow more on the sunny side than on the shady one, so that an unsymmetrical plant is produced. After a while, this dissymmetry becomes permanent, — so turn them often. It seems ridiculous to even talk about this, but I see so many plants, otherwise beautiful, which have been spoiled by the omission of this simple precaution, that I feel it should be emphasized again.

CONCLUSION

This African Violet hobby of ours is a lot of fun. It is so large that it has a number of facets or sides, which provide different enjoyments or pleasures, so that any individual can find his particular pleasure somewhere in the group. Collecting different varieties is a lot of fun. So is the raising of baby plants from leaves, watching them develop and grow. Hybridizing, originating new varieties, gives a very real pleasure. Making new and better friends through the common violet interest, coming to meetings such as this, broadening our circle of human contacts, acquaintances and friends yields intense enjoyment. Not the least of these various pleasures is the growing of specimen plants. After all, the basic object of the entire endeavor is to have a pretty plant, and the successful accomplishment of this ideal produces a thrill that is worth all the work and worry and trouble it takes. It has been a source of a great deal of pleasure to me, and I heartily commend it to you.

ATTENTION CLUBS

The 1950 AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY CONVENTION will be held on May 12 and 13 at the Bellevue Stratford in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. We are extending a cordial invitation to all local African Violet clubs to take an active part in the convention. Your club is invited to display plants and year books. Remember, the popularity of your club will increase extensively if it takes part in our program.

If you belong to a local African Violet club, have your president or secretary contact me and give me the following information as soon as possible;

1. Name and addresses of officers.
2. Number of membership in your group.
3. Number of National membership in your club.
4. Do you desire space set aside for your club plant display; remember the space is limited.
5. Will you enter your club year book?

Have your local club help make the 1950 Convention in the Quaker City the greatest success in the history of the African Violet Society of America.

Mrs. R. J. Schadewald, Chairman
7 Lexington Ave;
Havertown, Pa.

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The Aristocrats of the Saintpaulias are now available for the first time.

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SOLUBLE SALTS

Harriet F. Lawton

As an introduction to this article, I am quoting a definition of "Soluble Salts" as given in the book "Commercial Flower Growing", by Professors Alex Laurie and D. C. Kiplinger of The Ohio State University and published by The Blakiston Company of Philadelphia. This subject has a decided place in Floriculture and can be kept under control if handled in the right way. To quote from this book:

"Soluble Salts: Soluble salts constitute the total soluble organic and inorganic fertilizer materials that are contained in a soil at any given time. Rarely does it refer to the sodium chloride (table salt) content of the soil. There are soluble salts in soil at all times, due to the presence of such major fertilizer elements as nitrates, phosphates, potassium, calcium, etc., and the trace elements of iron, magnesium, aluminum, calcium and numerous others. When the total amount of these fertilizer materials becomes too high, roots are injured and plant growth is impaired. The toxic soluble salt levels vary with the crop and the type of soil; the more organic matter in a soil, the higher the soluble salt concentration may become before injury occurs."

Soluble salts in the correct amounts can be beneficial to plant growth, but in excess they can be decidely harmful. This may be kept under control in several ways. First, have a complete soil analysis made at your State Experiment Station and ask their advice. They will tell you what is lacking and how to balance your soil for a given purpose.

My introduction to soluble salts was rather a sad one, and it may be of some help to others. A black fibrous loam was purchased at a local greenhouse. It was considered fine for the purpose. (African Violets are heavy feeders.) The foliage of plants was very healthy, but when buds came, it was only to drop after a day or so. Great care was taken to have all growing conditions right (no gas, moist air, right temperature, watering, etc.) but bud drop continued. Finally, looking into the soil question, I found it was too heavily fertilized — too high a nitrogen content (soluble salts) which can cause bud drop. (However, there are other causes of bud drop as well.) The soil was distasteful to the root system, as the root ball was far too small for the size of the top growth, and roots stopped growing as soon as they reached this new earth. They confined themselves to the soil in the original earth ball. This is just one incident of how an excess of this ingredient may affect plants.

In a case such as the above, the salts might be leached out before potting plants by pouring water on from the top of a container and letting the salts leach away or run through with the water. This process should be repeated three or four times before potting plants. My preference however, was to obtain the right soil and pot plants in that.

If one has the right proportion of salts, then they must be kept somewhat under control, and this may be governed according to the various types of watering. In all kinds of capillary watering, (by constant water-level, glass wicks, and plants watered from the saucer) the action of the water is through the bottom and sides of the pot upwards. With this upward movement of water, the soluble salts are carried from around the root system where they are needed, to the surface of the soil. (Plants watered in this way do not need as much feeding.) Inasmuch as these salts rise to the surface of the pot, it is necessary to carry them back to the root system, and this is done by occasional surface watering. Use warm water and surface water every three or four weeks. Each time this is done, it is a means of feeding the plant. In between times plant food is used according to instructions; and it is suggested that one alternate this with the three or four week surface watering.

For those who water their plants from the top, more frequent feeding is necessary, as some of the salts are leached out and must be replaced.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Not all back issues of the magazine are now in print.

Requests for these must be made on penny post cards and you will be notified which ones are available.

Do not send money until you are notified.

— Editor

VIOLETS GROW in new, amazing Syco Bowls

Intensive research has developed the bowls acclaimed at recent AVSA convention. SYCO bowls cut down attention necessary for indoor plants and flowers; exclusive moisture control aids growth. Available in 2 colors and 14 shapes, $1.00 to $3.50. If your florist doesn't stock them write directly to —

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28 S. Wycombe Ave.
Lansdowne, Pa.

SHOWS HERE AND THERE

CONVENTION EXHIBIT

By Floyd Johnson

The Third Annual Convention of the African Violet Society of America, held at Cincinnati April 29th and 30th, was a winner in many ways! It took the Blue Ribbon for largest attendance, as well as for many other reasons, which you will see. No one felt like a stranger very long, as almost immediately you met someone who was in one of your robins or pigeons - or you found a friend from your area and, of course, immediately began a conversation on one or more phases concerning African violets. Many had made previous plans to meet, and it was quite a common thing to find someone inquiring for one of his friends. But even that was not necessary, as you knew you were among friends and all you had to do was smile, and immediately a friendship was made with your neighbor!

Quite a goodly number arrived on Thursday and had the opportunity of visiting greenhouses and other points of interest.

Friday morning at 9:00 o'clock found Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Chairman of the local committee on arrangements, with her able assistants, registering the many who came from far away places to attend the great convention. Planes, trains, busses, and autos brought the multitude (didn't hear of even one hitch-hiker). It was at this desk that you got your meal tickets and received the lovely large badge for identification (an African Violet -of course- and I think a Blue Boy at that). Did see some people with white badges but these were reserved for officers and officials!

Here in the foyer was found a bulletin board, resting on an easel, showing the many pictures that had been used previously in the Magazine, along with other interesting photographs and items. At another spot were shown the many envelopes of the Magazine which were incorrectly addressed and had been returned. Do check this list printed in the magazine to see if there is someone that you know and could give assistance in seeing that they get their magazines. Later - there was a display of all the many photographs which were taken during the convention. If you were at the meetings, it is almost a certainty that you were in at least one photograph. Many left their orders so that they could show the photos to their friends at home. (These can still be ordered).

The first event was the Luncheon meeting at 12:30. After eating a delightful meal, we listened to two young professionals speak at a Symposium on Origination of New and Improved Varieties of African Violets. Mr. William Merkel of Mentor, Ohio, spoke on the above topic "Through Processes of Hybridization and Seeding." Mr. R. A. Brown, Jr. of Newnan, Ga. spoke on the same topic "Through Processes of Mutation and Subsequent Selection." (The contents of these and other speeches will be found elsewhere in this issue.) Mr. Henry Peterson of Cincinnati, Ohio, presided at this meeting.

Three o'clock - Friday afternoon - was a very important time for a good many people. At that time the doors were opened for the exhibit of the newer varieties of African Violets. Yes - there was a little pushing and shoving - then shortly afterwards everybody practically stood still and looked with envy and awe. Of course, they all wanted the newest ones and those just weren't to be had -- as yet

J. A. Peterson & Son of Cincinnati, Ohio, showed many of the better varieties and some were in "Supreme". They have an outstanding variety "Kay's Quilted" which will be introduced some time in the future.

Yoars Houseplant Nursery of Bunker Hill, Indiana exhibited many fine varieties.

R. A. Brown & Sons Co. of Newnan, Ga. brought Old Lace, Raggedy Ann, and several of the dwarf forms which proved to be very interesting.

Tinari Floral Gardens of Bethayres, Pa. displayed the new Fischer doubles which took the eye of many of us. Pencils jotted down "Double Margaret, Double Orchid and others" and one could see determined looks that they "must" have these.

Good and Reese. Springfield, Ohio, exhibited five new duPonts which were truly outstanding. They were indeed new as they didn't have names as yet and went under the captions of "duPont #1, duPont #2, etc. "Now that is what I would call an African Violet!", exclaimed one eager beaver (woman, I mean). "I absolutely must have one of those but which one?" - "Let me see - - " Then a pitiful cry came from the rear - "Lady, will you please move on?"

C. Merkel & Sons of Mentor, Ohio, showed many of their beautiful violets. Merkel's Giant Blue was introduced with exceptionally large dark blue flowers. Mentor Boy and Dark Blue Bird were there along with several others.

Uleries of Springfield, Ohio exhibited a number of their fine unnamed seedlings. Mr. Slough in charge.

One of the highlights of the convention was the Amateur Seedling exhibit. These violets were very ably judged by Phyllis Farrell, Ferne Kellar and Mrs. Frank Tinari. Competition was very keen as all of the plants were outstanding and showed promise of being some of our newer varieties. Some had even been named. The first award was given to Mrs. Z. C. Layson who was presented with a silver loving cup.

The Exhibit was well attended . . .

Members were most interested . . .

Looking over the Amatuer Seedling Exhibit.

Second award was given to Mrs. Ross Swinford; third to Mrs. C. T. Hughes; fourth to Mrs. C. T. Hughes; fifth to Mrs. Helen Pochurek; sixth to Mrs. Elsie Freed and seventh to Mrs. C. T. Hughes; The last six winners were given Sycobowls as prizes. This is a feature which has great promise and should lend encouragement to the many amateurs who are indeed doing their share in bringing out newer and better varieties.

The annual banquet was "one of the main attractions" and certainly proved just that. After partaking of a sumptuous meal, we settled back in our chairs for a very delighful address by Dr. Alex Laurie, Head of Floriculture of the Ohio State University. He spoke on "African Violets as I Know Them", and he really did know them! ! He spoke with authority, as his department has been working with African Violets for some time and they have tried out many of the "do's and don'ts". A colored movie was shown at the close of the banquet on "Interesting Activities in Cincinnati". Colored slides of African Violets were also shown and proved to be very interesting. Our African Violet President very capably presided.

Saturday morning arrived with early breakfast at 8:00. Yes, many were late! This proved to be another popular gathering and three experienced growers spoke on "The Easiest and Most Practical Ways to

Looking over some of the Commercial Exhibits.

Produce Full Blooming Specimen Plants of African Violets". Mrs. Raymond Crotty, Huntington, West Virginia. Mr. Harvey, Dunwoody, Ga., and Mrs. Z. C. Layson of Maysville, Kentucky, offered many ways which would be of help to us. Mrs. Clarissa Harris of Los Angeles, California, presided.

After the breakfast, many took the busses to Peterson's Greenhouses, and, judging by all the boxes and packages that came back, I think that they enjoyed their trip.

Saturday Noon Luncheon, with Alma Wright presiding, was the "beginning of the end" of the convention. Too soon we had to trek back to our abodes to dream of another convention in the future. After the luncheon, the Annual business meeting of the Society membership was held. Reports of officers and Committees of the Society were made. Great progress was shown all along the line and the past officers and committees were to be well commended for the splendid work which they had done. Election of the officers for the coming year took place and then - - fond farewells.

TINARIS DISPLAY VIOLETS IN TWO FLOWER SHOWS

Those attending the Philadelphia Flower Show were thrilled by the display of African violets from the Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, which included forty-five varieties of plants and blooms. For the Tinaris, it was a week of reunion as violets enthusiasts from many states stopped at the booth to discuss the culture of the violets. Membership blanks for the African Violet Society of America were signed.

At the International Flower Show in the Grand Central Palace, New York City, the prize-winning display of African violets from Tinari Gardens covered an area of twenty-five square feet, there being twenty-five outstanding specimen varieties of the violets. They were exhibited in flower pots and growing in moss-filled crevices of two logs. A pure albino with white leaves and no flowers was the center of attraction. Nine months old seedlings, no larger than a dime, were also shown. A prize of $25 was awarded. This was the first year that African violets were included in the national show. Tinari Gardens supplied violets for a television show during the week presented by Helen Van Pelt Wilson author of the popular new book, 'The African Violet'.

MINNEAPOLIS EXHIBIT

The non-competitive display and educational exhibit sponsored by the Minneapolis African Violet Club was held on April 21 and 22, 1949, in the showroom of the Northern States Power Company, 15 South 5th Street, Minneapolis, Minn.

207 plants, including 35 varieties, were on display, furnished by 40 exhibitors. There were two commercial displays which added greatly to the show. An educational table showing the methods of propagation, both seed and leaf cuttings, and showing year old plants grown from both methods, was in charge of Mrs. A. H. Adams, Secretary of the Minneapolis Club, and proved to be one of the highlights of the display.

This was the first African violet display in the Northwest and drew many visitors from surrounding states.

MEMPHIS AND SHELBY COUNTY SHOW

The spring show of the Memphis and Shelby County African Violet Society was held in the Memphis Museum on March 26 and 27, 1949. Visitors were attracted from neighboring counties and states to view the display of specimen plants. arrangements and propagation demonstrations.

Guest of honor was Mrs. Robert Wright, Knoxville, Tennessee, President of The African Violet Society Of America, who served as Chairman of Judges for the show.

Staging and decoration of the many long tables were under the direction of Mrs. Edward Toulon. Mrs. John E. Hooper was general chairman.

Sweepstakes winner of specimens was Mrs. W. A. Boyette, 3735 Graves Road, for the variety Red Head. Mrs. W. E. Evans won the sweepstakes on arrangements. Mrs. H. L. McPherson took seven ribbons in the First Bloomers division.

Notable was an albino plant grown by Mrs. Frank Ruffin, Whitehaven, Tenn., who won the most ribbons at the show. She had 10 blue, 3 red and white ribbons. Mrs. J. W. Dickey won 10 ribbons.

Other blue ribbon winners were: Mrs. Robert Bruce, Mrs. Dave Guyton, Mrs, C. W. Seahorn. Mrs. Herbert Coffman, Mrs. C. O. Cook, Sr., Mrs. W. E. Ward, Mrs. Horace Smith, Miss Daisy Jones and Mrs. W. P. Fraser.

Mrs. W. C. Hope, left, President of the club and Mrs. Frank Ruffin, right, showing her prize winning Pink Beauty Supreme.

Mrs. W. E. Ward served as hostess for the show, her assistant committe including several members of the local club.

Mrs. W. C. Welborn and Mrs. John Pierce were in charge of the commercial growers exhibits.

ALEXANDRIA SHOW

Gadsby's Tavern, in Alexandria, Virginia, on May 22nd, was the setting for the Second Annual African Violet Show sponsored by the Metropolitan African Violet Club for the benefit of the Cancer Fund. Alexandria's Bicentennial Celebration was responsible, in part, for the number of States represented by the visitors who registered, for, in addition to the District of Columbia, visitors came from twelve States, including Maine, Texas and California.

Forty exhibitors entered the 282 plants of over 70 varieties that were staged on three-tiered tables covered in white and attractively trimmed in green. Uniform wrapping of all pots in aluminum foil further added to the pleasing appearance of the display.

Mrs. Robert Wright, President of the African Violet Society of America, and Dr. Freeman Weiss, Senior Pathologist, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Beltsville, Maryland, officiated most capably as judges and awarded the following seventeen prizes the first three receiving a compote, candle sticks and gravy boat in silver, respectively:-

Best in the Show, Mrs. A. N. Carter, For Mentor Boy; 2nd Best in Show, Mrs. Geo. Furman, For White Lady; 3rd Best in Show, Mrs. George H. Shelton, For Heart's Desire,

Left to right: Dr. Weiss, Regina Gottshall, Alma Wright.

Best in Class I, Mrs. D. G. Clever, For Mentor Boy.

Best in Class II, Mrs. L. C. Rosenkrans, For Crinkles.

Best in Class III, Mrs. A. N. Carter, For For Blue Eyes.

Best in ClassIV, Mrs. A. N. Carter, For Red Head.

Best in Class V, Mrs. L. K. Shakelton, For DuPont Amethyst.

Best in Class VI, Mrs. Avery Rawles, For Pink Beauty.

Best in Class VII, Mrs. Nora Ford, For Imperial White.

Best in Class VIII, Mrs. Nora Ford, For Persian Lilac.

Best in Class IX, Mrs. L. C. Rosenkrans, (Multiples) For White Lady.

Best in Class X, Mrs. T. H. Naylor, (Novelties) For Fantacy - a new break in coloring bearing mottled orchid and blue blossoms.

Best in Class XI, Mrs. Nora Ford, For Double Blue Boy.

Mrs. M. E. Greene's DuPont Blue, with a spread of but 2½ inches carried away the prize for the "smallest blooming plant" and a huge Ionantha won for Mrs. James Corbalis the prize as being the "largest blooming plant" in the Show.

Mrs. Nora Ford, in addition to the above three prizes, also won the Sweepstakes prize of a waffle iron for the largest number of points, and can be called the "champion exhibitor". Nine Plants were entered by Mrs. Ford and eight awards won, including three additional blue ribbons and two second place.

Two special awards were made by the judges; one for "arrangement" to Mrs. L. C. Rosenkrans for a huge pot containing six Red Heads planted in a circle, and the second was given on McFarland's Blue Warrior for "outstanding foliage", as the plant was not in bloom.

One dozen red roses were presented to Mrs. George H. Shelton for her Heart's Desire, selected by popular vote of the visitors, as being the "favorite plant in the show".

The mantlepiece and prize table were beautifully decorated with floral arrangements containing Saintpaulia blooms with other flowers and plant material by Miss Spears.

Among the out-of-town and distinguished guests were Mrs. Arthur Radtke, President-elect for 1950 of the African Violet Society of America; Mrs. Esther Schaldwald, Director of Second Region; Mrs. Gibson C. Phillips, President of the Richmond African Violet Society (Virginia); Mrs. Homer C. Foltz, President of the Lewistown African Violet Club (Penna.); Mrs. O. W. Richman and Mrs. G. S. Keen, one the present Vice-President and the other immediate Past President of the Salem County African Violet Society, New Jersey; and Mr. and Mrs. C. T. Hughes, of Huntington, West Virginia. Mrs. Hughes was winner of many awards in the Amateur Seedling Class at the recent National Convention in Cincinnati.

BATTLE CREEK

Battle Creek, Michigan's first African Violet show was held Thursday, April 21, 1949, at the Y. W. C. A., with over 600 visitors signing the guest book. It was sponsored by the Battle Creek African Violet Society of which Mrs. Dale Ferrall is president. Mrs. Ferrall was also show chairman, and in charge of arrangements, assisted by Mrs. Charles Bailey, Mrs. Steinel, Mrs. Maurice Armstrong, Mrs. Harry Theis, Mrs. Blanche Peck, Mrs. Haffenden, and Mrs. Jack Walton.

The 50 entries in the show were from Battle Creek, Augusta and Union City. Judges were Prof. C. E. Wildon and Evan Roberts from the Michigan State College.

Prizes awarded were —

Best Collection of 3 named varieties, Mrs. Geo. Bailey, 1st; Mrs. A. C. Leifso, 1st; Mrs. Faye Haffenden, 2nd; Mrs. Dale Ferrall, 2nd; Mrs. Anna Hall, 3rd.

Best 3 non-blooming, judged for leaf pattern, Mrs. Faye Haffenden, 1st; Mrs. Floyd Shay, 1st.
Pink Group, Miss Marie Little, 1st; Mrs. Hall, 2nd; Mrs. A. H. Steinel, 3rd.

White Group, Miss Little, 1st; Mrs. Steinel, 2nd.

Blue, Orchid and Red Group, Mrs. Floyd Wilkes, 1st; Mrs. Ferrall, 2nd; Mrs. Steinel, 2nd; Mrs. Haffenden, 3rd; Miss Louise Davis, 3rd.

Best Individual plant named, Miss Marion Coffing, 1st; Mrs. Agnes Smith, 2nd; Mrs. Wilkes, 2nd; Mrs. Ferrall, 3rd; Mrs. B. H. Welch, 3rd. Best Individual plant unnamed, Mrs. Ferrall, 1st; Mrs. Hall, 2nd; Mrs. Haffenden, 3rd;.

Best Multiple Crown, Mrs. Ferrall, 1st; Mrs. Hall, 1st; Mrs. M. C. Flanders, 2nd; Mrs. J. Harold Peck, 2nd; Mrs. Haffenden, 3rd.

Best collection of 3 baby plants not more than 4 inches across, Mrs. Ferrall, 1st; Mrs. Shay, 2nd; Miss Little, 3rd.

Center of attraction was a large collection of hard to get varieties on display to acquaint the public with the many lovely new varieties available soon.

COLUMBUS EXHIBIT

Some 4 or 5 hundred visitors viewed the exhibit staged by The Columbus African Violet Society held on the 11 and 12 of June in the ball-room of The Park-View Hotel. Three hundred pots were on exhibit and comprised around fifty different varieties. It was an exhibit to promote enthusiasm with out any classification or prizes given. Plans are under way for a show the date to be announced later.

ROCHESTER SHOW

The African Violet Society of Rochester and Vicinity held its first show on May 15th at the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences. The show was open to the public from 2:00 P.M. until 9:00 P.M. It has been reported that over 6,000 were in attendance. The register showed visitors from 50 towns of New York State. Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, Canada and Nova Scotia were also represented.

There were 325 beautiful plants exhibited in 75 varieties. These were very capably judged by Mrs. Robert Wright of Knoxville, Tenn., President of the African Violet Society of America; Mrs. Dudley Wilson, Interlaken, N. Y. and Mr. Karl E. Lewis of Lockport, N. Y.

Queen of the Show Award (best plant) was given to Mrs. Elmer C. Ace of Honeoye for her lovely plant of Neptune. Mrs. Ace's plant of Duchess was judged as the second best plant of the show. Sweepstakes Award was given to Mrs. John Doell of Webster for winning eight blue ribbons. Other multiple prize winners in the Variety classes were: Mrs. Orrin Doell-Canadaigua, Mrs. Ruth Webster-Port Gibson and Mr. Floyd L. Johnson-Spenceport -- five blue ribbons each. Mrs. Elmer C. Ace of Honeoye had a total of four; Mrs. Charles Anthony of Rochester-three; Mrs. Cornelia M. Johnson-Caledonia, Mrs. Robert Slocomb -Rochester and Mrs. Edith Flory of Geneseo -two ribbons each. Other firsts were widely scattered among the many exhibitors.

A separate section was given to non-members, with the following winning blue ribbons: Mrs. W. DeJonge--blue-purple class; Mrs. H. Honeck--Lavender-Orchid class; Mrs. Everett F. Siller--Pink class; Mrs. Everett F. Siller-- White class; Mrs. S. Chase--Two-tone class and Mrs. Edward Ackerman in the Non-blooming class.

Another feature of the show was the Decorative Class, which was very capably judged by Mrs. Harold L. Field and Mrs. Charles McGee of Rochester. The exhibitors had used ingenuity in displaying the fragile blossoms in many ways. There were tiny arrangements in shadow boxes and large displays using African Violets with other blossoms. Terrariums, glass gardens, floating arrangements, corsages and a very novel arrangement of an African Violet plant reposing inside a bird cage while "Dickie" was left on the outside with the thought "Can't keep African Violets from any place". Mrs. Patrick Carlin-Rochester, won two blue ribbons in this class, with the following winning one each: Mrs. H. Harmon, Mrs. Robert Slocomb, Mrs. H. Lyman, Mrs. J. Berend, Mrs. John Hickey, and Mrs. Joseph Weber all of Rochester.

Mr. Floyd Johnson and Alma Wright.

Another very popular feature was a detailed display on propagation. All the "popular" questions were asked and one lady reported that she answered the question "How do I make my African Violets bloom?" no less than five hundred times!

Mrs. Hawley B. Nell of Rochester was Chairman of the show.

FLINT AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY SHOW

The Flint African Violet Society held its first spring African Violet show on May 4th, 1949 from 2 to 9 o'clock at the Institute of Arts Bldg. Flint, Mich.

Mrs. Frank Dilley was chairman of the show assisted by Mrs. Wm. Jaynes, co-chairman.

As the violet enthusiasts entered the Willson gallery they saw a veritable fairyland of colors ranging from glistening white thru palest pink, orchid to deepest purple. In all about 125 varieties were shown.

The first display was masses of Saintpaulias in their native habitat of ferns, rocks and mosses with a white alabaster fountain in the shape of a wild hyacinth from which perfumed water trickled on the rocks and mosses. Above this fastened to the wall were charts and maps depicting the history of the Saintpaulia from the first Blue Boy and Ionantha down to the present duPonts, and others.

The Propagation Display was next showing seeds to blooming plants. Leaves were started in seven different rooting media as well as plants in all stages of growth showing different plant foods and fertilizers used.

From left to right: Mrs. Elliott, Mrs. Dilley, Mrs. Jaynes.

The African Violet Hospital was unique in that it had actual thrips, mealy bugs, earthworms, etc. in sealed jars (glass). It also showed infested plants in acquariums. Also shown were different insecticides and how to use each one.

Next display took in Water and Exposure exhibit showing the different ways of watering such as sprinkling, glass dish, wik-fed pot. Also different pots, clay, glazed, wik-fed, etc. showing the merits of each. Also shown were plants from different exposures as well as overfertilized plants.

Still another display was African Violets attractively arranged in antique dishes such as bone china tea cup, tea pot, etc. The youngest plant to the oldest were shown. Also scattered throughout the rooms were hundreds of African Violets.

Another display which was most unusual was the handpainted china dishes by one of the Society's members - Mrs. I. E. Clement.

A dinner table featuring "A Maypole Dance of the Dolls" with its maypole in the center of Pink Beauty violet with pastel shades of ribbon streamers attached to various hues of minature old fashioned dolls marked each place setting.

A blonde maple tier table with six glass shelves holding the following African Violets Ionantha - Trilby - Neptune - Amarantha - Amethyst - Topaz - after which each chapter was named caused a great deal of comment.

A handicraft display consisted of violet hankies, aprons, seals, stationery, ear rings, pins - all of violets - also cookies in the shape of a violet blossom iced with pastel shades.

The high-light of the show, however, was a large table in center of the room, the background being hung with cloth of gold with "Say it with Violets" in deep purple letters attached. This display was on "How to Glamorize the African Violet for Special Occasions", by Mrs. Frank Dilley and Mrs. Wm. Jaynes.

An Easter basket held a Blue Girl Amazon.

The Blessed Event was a pottery baby cradle holding a Heavenly Blue African Violet watching over this was a very colorful stork.

Christmas was a sparkling White King African Violet flanked by 6 red tapers in silver candelabra. Valentine Day was represented by a red heart with a white lace doily and red cellophane, holding a glistening White Lady violet.

May Day, a pink and blue crystal basket holding a beautiful Dupont Blue.

Mothers Day, an Ionantha African Violet was used which was flanked by a handpainted violet china plate for mother.

Fathers day was naturally a Redhead violet which was decorated with the following items - cigarettes, cigars, gum, lifesavor mints, golf tees, etc. which were fastened to pipecleaner sticks stuck into the pot.

In the North gallery tea was served from 2 until 4 o'clock.

MIDWEST SHOW

The Second Midwest African Violet exhibit, sponsored by the Omaha African Violet Society, Inc., was held in the Joslyn Memorial, 22nd and Dodge Street, Omaha on March 26 and 27, 1949. The non-competitive display drew an attendance of 8,000 in the two days it was held.

The displays were arranged on two long tables in the center of the room, each built up in tiers and covered with green foil paper. Between these two tables was a variety and propagation table, on which were many new and lovely unnamed seedlings and varieties. Propagation methods and materials used were also shown on this table.

Several hundred red and yellow roses against a back ground of palms lent a festive air to the room.

Much credit for the success of the display goes to Mr. Raymond Gain, who again was exhibit chairman.

Mrs. R. C. Adams is the president of the Omaha Club, which was organized in November 1947.

OFFICERS OF OMAHA CLUB AT SHOW
From left to right: Mrs. Nordgren, Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Munson.

DELAWARE COUNTY SHOW

The African Violet Society of Delaware County held its first show on Saturday April 9, 1949, in the Community Methodist Church in Springfield, Delaware County, Pa.

It was a beautiful day, and 505 violet lovers came to witness the lovely display of 88 blooming specimen plants. All the members of the club felt well repaid for their efforts by the comments of the visitors.

Mrs. J. Paul Muntz displayed a miniature house and garden featuring African Violets and Mrs. W. L. Becker featured a few of her choice plants in a lovely tier table arrangement.

From left to right — Mrs. Filing, Mrs. Becker, Mrs. Turner, Mrs. Schadewald.

THE EASIEST AND MOST PRACTICAL WAY TO PRODUCE FULL BLOOMING SPECIMEN PLANTS OF AFRICAN VIOLETS

Ethel Crotty

I can answer this in one word — "Greenhouse" — but unfortunately we can not all have them. I might have the Oak Ridge Tenn. growers tell you of their success with their Atom Bomb soil, and quick growing plants.

Seriously, I do want to tell you that your African Violet hobby can bring more pleasure to you and to more people than any other hobby I have ever known. Our sick friends are always delighted with a plant and now we have the opportunity to work with them in our Veteran Hospitals. Everyone loves a giver and African Violet people are the most generous givers.

With a few leaves, a little thought and ambition and some good soil, if you choose, you may end up in the commercial world. There is no end to the pleasure you can have or give others by the cultivation of African Violets — you can make it a large world or a small world.

My method for producing Blooming Specimen plants in the shortest time works for me and I hope it will for you too — however if you have a good method, keep it and forget mine.

I propagate by the water method — as soon as the leaf roots, I put it into Vermiculite until I have a small plant but a strong and healthy one. Then I transfer it to potting soil. I watch for the tiny suckers or offsets and remove them each time with a round toothpick. I keep turning my plants so they will stay symmetrical and beautiful.

Around the middle of last October I started some leaves in water, then put the rooted leaves in Vermiculite. At Thanksgiving time I transplanted into soil. Now they are lovely blooming plants — six and seven inches across with six different stems of blossoms and buds. To me there is nothing one could do that would bring so much pleasure in such a short time.

It is against a woman's vanity to grow old — and it is often said "that a pansy smiles in your face" so we will reverse our smile with African Violets and wear it ourselves when our choiciest plants produce their first bloom.

It has also been said that if we were born without a pretty face and still do not have a pretty face at the age of twenty-five, that is to be excused — but if we attain the age of 50 and do not have some pretty feature of the face, we have missed something along Life's pathway. But you will never find it missing in the face of an African Violet grower.

(Mrs. Crotty kindly gave the editor this copy of her talk at the Convention.)

ALLERGIC TO YOUR AFRICAN VIOLETS?

Harvey Cox

Can a person become sensitive to the African Violet and develop an allergy which will express itself in any one of many forms such as hay-fever, asthma, hives and eczema? It is possible for a person by close association to become hypersensitive to the Afrian Violet, but not in the ordinarily accepted manner. Pollen can be the irritant, but the African Violet is rarely self-pollinating, therefore, the pollen is not air borne but confined to the anthers. Handling flowers that have been shed could result in contact with pollen. Such contact can be avoided by disposing of flowers as they drop. Do not split or crush anthers, to avoid contact with offending pollen.

Another possible factor and probably the most likely is that of house dust that collects on the hairy surface of the leaves. This hazard can be avoided by keeping the leaves dust free by periodic warm water showers.

The last possibility that comes to mind is actual skin contact with juices exuded from the wound of broken leaf blade or stem. If you are putting down leaf cuttings, then wear rubber gloves; however, an occasional contact from an accidentally broken leaf should not offend.

There is no reason for alarm if you are sensitive to your African Violets, simply try the suggested remedies and continue to enjoy your plants.

(Editor's Note - For Land Sakes!)

ATTRACTIVE CONTAINERS

Rose Hahn

Why not display your prettiest African Violets in unusual and attractive containers? Try something different! A familiar plant will take on a more glamorous appearance when used in a new way or in a novel setting.

The violets used in the illustrations are growing in small clay pots . . . . . small enough so that it is possible to conceal all the pot in the outside vessel.

Frequent watering and a regular fertilizing program keeps these plants in a healthy condition, and permits their being kept in clay pots small enough to fit inside many kinds of containers.

For suggestions on dressing your Saintpaulia collection for show, look over these pictures and those on the following pages.

Photographs were made by Ross Hahn

1- above- A dignified antique Samovar for a medium blue Mrs. W. K. duPont violet. The color combination is pleasing.

2- Pink Girl in a tall clear beverage glass. Attractive as well as helpful. A plant grown a container such as this may do especially well. The glass holds in the humidity around the clay pot, permits the free circulation of air around the whole plant, and supports the foliage as well.

1- A favorite for a coffee table is this small brass cuspidor. It makes an almost ideal jardinere for this Orchid Beauty .

2- In a low crystal s
Blue is shown at adva
tainer that the plant
well.

1- This Gorgeous in an antique copper tea kettle seems right at home. The wine flowers and spooned two-toned green leaves are eye catching.

2- White Supreme in a
with a soft orange-red a
a white background.

on holder, Hardee
ge. Another con-
ems to like quite

3- An old silver sugar bowl makes an interesting and distinctive setting for a Lavender-Pink duPont seedling.

ld sugar bowl
gold design on

3- Dainty is the Lavender-Pink duPont in an after dinner coffee cup . . . white edged with gold.

COMPOST FOR AFRICAN VIOLETS

Leslie George

While we all have our favorite potting mixtures for African Violets - soil, peat moss, and sand; soil, vermiculite, and sphagnum moss; soil plus this; or soil plus that; - nevertheless, the formula invariably begins with soil. We commonly say that it must be rich, so most of us add something to the poor earth available to us - manure, phosphate, bone meal, nitrogenous mixtures of one sort or another, any one of the many complete packaged fertilizers, or else - Compost. This article will deal with the preparation of Compost in small quantities.

First, what is compost and what are the advantages of its use? Compost consists, entirely, of organic substance decomposed by a process of fermentation induced by the action of bacteria and helpful fungi. By "decomposed", we mean that the physical structure of the materials used is broken down into their elementary particles so thoroughly that the original matter is no longer identifiable. Compost supplies organic plant food in its most assimilable form. Made properly, it is free from weed seeds. A growing number of enthusiasts are sold on the principal that its use results in sturdier, more disease-resistant plants.

Compost, prepared according to the specifications of the experts, must be made solely of organic materials. What organic materials are is best defined by outlining first what they are not. They are NOT chemically produced, artificially manufactured fertilizers. Some examples of inorganic fertilizers are the following: nitrate of soda,, ammonium sulphate, superphosphate, muriate of potash, and of course, those commercial preparations bought ready mixed and labeled as to their nitrogen, phosphorous, and potash content. Examples of organic materials, on the other hand, are: animal manure, as well as other animal by products such as blood, bone meal, hoof and horn meal, and anything else which was originally part of a living animal; next, all those materials originating in vegetable matter as grass, leaves, cottonseed meal, and what have you; then, those mineral fertilizers not produced by chemical processes, such as ground limestone, phosphate rock in its natural state, dolomite, and other natural mineral products.

Compost is made by piling in a heap, layers of vegetable materials alternated with layers of animal matter, with a little earth and limestone sprinkled over the animal portion. Air holes reaching to the bottom are incorporated as the heap is constructed, or are added after completion. The whole thing, top and sides, is covered with earth or straw to keep the heat and moisture in. As soon as the pile has been built, fermentation begins and heat develops within it to a temperature of around 160° F. At this stage, heat- resistant bacteria are at work upon the animal and vegetable matter - therefore, it is important that the material be piled loosely and air holes properly installed. At the end of three weeks, the material in the pile is rebuilt into a new heap to one side of its original location. Air holes are made once more, as the oxygen-requiring bacteria are still performing their work of decomposition. Five weeks later the pile is given its final turn. Now, it is not necessary to incorporate air holes, since a new type of bacteria has taken over - a type which does not need oxygen. Four weeks after this final turn the compost should be ready to use.

The above is a sketch description of the manner in which a compost pile is built and the disintegrating action which takes place within it. Let's go on with some detailed instructions for a small pile with original dimensions of five feet square at the base, tapering to three feet square at a height of five feet.

First, determine the location. This should be on bare, level ground convenient to water and protected as much as possible from drying winds. It should be a shady spot - not under a tree but rather in the shade of a building or fence. Mark out the outline of the base of the pile.

Alongside your proposed heap and within easy reach of it, place your materials in separate piles; green matter in one, manure in the next, and earth and lime in the third. The succeeding paragraphs, treating each material individually, will tell you how much of each you will need.

Green Matter: Accumulate your green or vegetable matter by itself until you have a pile of it loosely constructed four feet long by four feet wide by four feet high with the sides straight up and down. This green material may be grass, weeds, spoiled hay, straw, vegetable trimmings, and anything else of this sort which decays readily All materials in this group must be allowed to wilt or partially rot before being incorporated into your compost pile. This is particularly true of leaves. Use last year's leaves and use them as only a percentage of your green elements - one sixth by volumn should be about the right proportion. Corn stalks might better be left out altogether; if you have to use them - allow them to decompose previously for several months. Avoid the use of wood substances. As you make this separate pile of green matter, wet it, so that it is uniformly moist. Allow any surplus water to drain off before these materials are built into the compost heap.

Manure: Pile your manure three cubic feet, with sides straight up and down. The manure must be the freshest you can obtain. We are used to the term "well-rotted manure", but that is not what we want for a compost heap. We want unrotted manure which will rot in the pile and, in process of rotting, decompose along with itself all the green matter.

Earth: You will need enough earth to make a pile in itself three feet by three feet by two feet high. The richer it is the better. It should not be acid for its use in the pile is for the purpose of preventing acidity of the compost. Bacteria cannot perform their function in an acid medium. If you must use woods soil, mix it with enough lime to bring it to an alkaline state.

Lime: You will not need much lime. As you build up the successive layers of your compost heap, you will need to sprinkle lime lightly over the surface of about seven layers. You should use agricultural, ground limestone.

Once your materials are in place and in the proper condition for use, you are ready to construct your compost heap. There is one more thing to consider first. You must provide for aeration of the pile. If you prefer, you may build the pile first and poke air holes in it when it is completed. You will have to make three holes six inches in diameter, equally spaced along the length of the center of the pile. A more satisfactory method is to build your heap around three posts, about six inches in diameter, set into the earth in the proper locations before the pile is started. They should be set into the ground loosely enough to be easily removed once the heap is completed.

Assuming that you have done this, begin your pile by laying on the ground a loose six inch layer of your green matter. Follow this with a two inch thickness of manure. Sprinkle lightly with ground limestone. Cover with an eighth of an inch of earth. If materials are not already moist enough, wet them as you proceed but be careful that you do not give them more water than they can hold. Over the earth lay another six inch layer of green materials, then the manure and the earth, repeating until the pile reaches a height of five feet. Make the last layer of manure thicker than the previous layers and the last covering of earth about two inches thick. The sides should then be covered with two inches of soil. As layer follows layer, all four sides of the pile are gradually narrowed so that the heap tapers in toward the center and the finished heap measures about three feet by three feet at the top. The top of the pile should not be level but depressed in the center to catch and hold rainfall.

The purpose of the soil covering for the sides and top is to prevent the heap from drying out and cooling too soon. A straw mulch would do the job better, but, it would have to be correspondingly thicker - about six inches.

Two or three days after completion, the pile will have settled under its own weight to a height of between two and three feet. At this time the posts should be removed carefully to leave three air holes.

Allow the pile to remain as it is for three weeks. In the meantime, there may be visible indications that the pile is fermenting and producing heat. You may see steam risng out of the air holes.

At the end of the three week period, set your posts into the ground again to one side of the original pile in the same relative positions they ocupied before. Then turn the pile. This means repiling the material around the posts in their new location in such a way that what was the top, becomes the bottom and what was the outside becomes the inside. This is to ensure uniformity of the finished compost by subjecting all of the material to the higher temperatures to be found in the interior of the heap. It is not necessary to keep the different materials in separate layers.

Five weeks later, reverse the pile once more. At this time you need not insert the posts. The pile is now two months old. It is allowed to "work" for another month, at the end of which time it should be ready to use. If it is not to be used immediately, it may be stored. In this case, it should be covered and turned occasionally during the storage period.

If you want less compost than you would get from the heap described above, try making it in wooden boxes with thinner layers. An inch of green matter to a third of an inch of manure with thin sprinklings of earth and lime would be about the right proportions to use. Turn the compost in the boxes at the same intervals outlined for the five by five pile and follow the same general directions.

Finished compost should be dark brown in color and have a substance that you can "feel". Break up lumps, if any, by working it over with any convenient tool.

Do not attempt to grow African Violets in pure compost. This is so full of fungi that you would be inviting disaster. Compost must be mixed with ordinary garden soil to keep the fungi in check. A half and half mixture should give you the "rich soil" recommended for African Violets. Starting with that, you can add your sand, vermiculite, peat, or sphagnum moss, confident that your finished mixture will contain all the life-giving elements your Violets require.

Let EARTHWORM CASTINGS grow African violets you want to shout about and exhibit.
3 lbs. castings for $1.00. Try it once.

OHIO EARTHWORM FARM
V-I Worthington, Ohio

GROWING AFRICAN VIOLETS UNDER FLUORESCENT LIGHT

Fay Stilwell

In October, 1947, when reports indicated we would have an acute oil shortage in this vicinity before the winter was over, I gave up the idea of a greenhouse and decided to try an experiment that would not require any extra heat, so had a fluorescent light put up in our basement.

I used a regular industrial type fixture about 50 inches long, utilizing two 40 Watt daylight type lamps under a white reflector. This light is controlled by an automatic time switch, so that I do not have to worry about turning it on and off each day.

For my experiment, I used several different kinds of plants including African Violets, Maidenhair Ferns, Begonias, etc., and had them on step fixtures so that I could try them at different distances from the light. Saintpaulia Bi-color was placed 2½ feet below the light, Mentor Boy 3¼ feet and Orchid Lady 4 feet below light. For the first three months I had the switch set to run the light twelve hours on and twelve hours off. The violets looked very healthy, leaves being a rich dark green and large in size, but even on Bi-color the petioles seemed a trifle too long and plants showed no sign of blooming, so I changed the light period to fourteen hours on and 10 hours off. Within a few weeks the violets started to bloom and Bi-color is now sixteen inches in diameter, the leaves being nearly four inches long and individual flowers one and three-quarter inches in diameter, with as many as six open at one time on a single flower stalk. Mentor Boy and Orchid Lady, being farther away from the light, were slower in blooming, but the flowers, although few in number, were much larger than on the same variety growing in my living room. I moved them both nearer the light, and they now show several bud clusters starting.

After trying this experiment for twelve months, I was so pleased that I had another light fixture of the same type installed using three 40 Watt Lamps. I am trying the regular white lamps in this fixture at the suggestion of one of the engineers in the General Electric Offices in New York, as he stated that a 40 Watt white Lamp would give me 380 more lumins of light than the daylight type I had been using. At the time of writing this, about six weeks after installation of my second light, it undoubtedly is too soon to determine which lamp is better for my purpose, but it does seem as though the leaves and flowers on the plants under the daylight type have a richer coloring.

This picture taken under the two tube fixture with daylight type bulbs.

My husband and I have been very much amused at the various comments of our friends regarding my experiment. One said he had never heard of growing plants in canned light and thought he had seen everything now, while another insists that I have some secret formula for feeding that I will not divulge. Personally I think a great deal of the success of my experiment, if I may call it that, is due to the even temperature, humidity that stays around 45 except on very damp days when it goes considerably higher, and the fact that there are no sudden drafts from the outside as we seldom use our outside basement entrance in the winter.

Another thing that has pleased me about my experiment is that I am able to move the plants up into my living room with no apparent setback. The first plant I brought upstairs was an extra calla lily begonia which for me is one of the most temperamental of house plants but which does make a most beautiful combination with dark blue African Violets. I put it first in a north window in my living room for two or three days, then moved it to the back of a south-west window for another couple of days; now it is growing near the front of that window and shows no signs of any setback. My three test African Violets, above mentioned, I have grown continuously under the Fluorescent light, but have changed other violet plants back and forth with no apparent ill effect.

In comparing my electric bills for the first twelve months of my experiment with those for the previous twelve months, I found that the additional cost averaged about $1.00 a month, which I feel is very little for the immense amount of fun I have had.

I have had no extra heating expense, as we have an oil burner in our basement and in the very coldest part of last winter I was able to keep the temperature up to at least 65 degrees simply by opening the door to the boiler room. The thermometer controlling the oil burner is upstairs in our living room so that allowing the heat from the boiler room to escape into the rest of the basement has no effect on the amount of oil we burn.

VIOLET PINS AND EAR RINGS

Made from Sea Shells in colors well known to African violet lovers — and many others. Pins or ear rings Blue Boy, Amethyst, Red Head, White Lady, Pink Lady, Sky Blue, Bi-Color $1.00 per pair. Corsages $2.00, men's lapel pins 75¢, scatter pins $1.00 per pair postpaid and tax included.

LAURA E. GREEN
541 Denise Rd.
Rochester 12, N. Y.

AFRICAN VIOLETS WITH A COLLEGE DEGREE

Jeanne Knoerle

It looks now as if African violets are going to college! At least, they are making a prominent appearance at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods college, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, where the Dean and a number of faculty members have become a part of that particular class of people known as African violet lovers.

The office of Sister Eugenia, S. P., Dean of the college, is made bright and friendly by the rows of pink, white and purple flowers that stand in the sun, on the sill of the window with a Southwestern exposure. All over campus, in classrooms, in the office of the Secretary, in unknown nooks and crannies, little Saintpaulias, Pink Beauties, and Blue Girls, rear their delicately tinted petals, much to the delight of their zealous cultivators.

Sister Eugenia, who began with one plant and much determination, has now sixteen plants and a great deal of satisfaction. Among her sixteen plants are a White Lady, with it's crown of snowy blossoms; a red-violet, low-growing Red Frieda; a clear, translucent lavender-blue Ionantha; Blue Girl with large, blue-purple flowers; and a yet-to-be-seen Milwaukee of the blue purple variety.

Each year, Sister gives many of her plants away to other Sisters teaching at missions, thereby propagating, in her own special manner, African violet growing. She has started on their flower-growing career several other members of the faculty of the college, where now a spirit of friendly competition and mutual admiration has arisen.

As efficient and busy administrator of a liberal arts college, Sister's time is naturally much in demand. Formerly, when she was away at necessary conventions and meetings, her secretary, Sister Julia Marie, who is an African violet grower in her own right, was entrusted with the care of the violets. However, Sister was recently transferred to Indianapolis, where both she and her African violets are established at St. Agnes' academy.

Her plants, Sister Eugenia insists, are the best behaved things on campus - - - and, as a student, I am in no position to disagree. Contrary to prescribed laws, Sister waters her flowers at night, and, judging from results, they must enjoy their nightly drink.

Many are the characteristics ascribed to African violets, particularly in the pages of this magazine, and perhaps education is not an especially unusual one. However, from a quick look around campus, and in all those nooks and crannies, it appears that African violets, as well as students, can profit from a college career.

ORIGINATION OF NEW AND IMPROVED VARIETIES OF AFRICAN VIOLETS THRU PROCESSES OF MUTATION AND SUBSEQUENT SELECTION

R. A. Brown, Jr.

(The following summary of subject material was generously given to the editor by Mr. Brown at the conclusion of his talk at the Cincinnati meeting.)

As many of you know, it is my Father who should be talking to you, but due to the state of his health, he is unable to travel or to appear before the public. In the past few years, we have been fortunate enough to develop and introduce several new or improved varieties of African Violets. Every introduction we have made has come directly through sports or mutations and subsequent leaf selections.

The biological meaning of the word sport is a plant or part of a plant which exhibits a sudden and spontaneous variation from the normal or usual type. A mutation is a well marked heritable variation in a whole plant or part of a plant. The two words, Sport and Mutation, mean practically the same thing.

Natural mutations and sports are undoubtedly caused by chance exposure to shock, change in temperature, electrical discharges, radiation, and other natural agencies that cause plant structure to vary. All plant growth and reproduction is based on the process of cell division and any change in the plant must come through a change in genes chromosomes that make up the cells. When speaking of mutations, we must exclude any change brought about through hybridization or cross pollination, as they are not mutations in any sense of the word.

The causes of mutations are not yet easy to recognize. In spite of the popular belief that environment is responsible for almost every thing a plant does, it appears that the causes of mutations are mainly intrinsic. That is, the change comes about from the inside of the plant and is not caused by environment. Possibly we believe this because of Kipling's "Just So Stories", in which he tells fantastic stories about how the leopard got his spots and how the elephant got his trunk. These stories illustrate the traditional belief in the inheritance of acquired characteristics; however we should not let them interfere with our serious thinking about plant sports and mutations.

Some mechanical means of helping induce mutations that have been tried are:

Centrifugal Force
Pressure
Vibration and Shock
Friction and Irritation

We have not experimented along these lines ourselves.

Another method of inducing mutations is through radiation. Under the general heading of Radiation, we find:

Cosmic Rays
Radiation
Neutrons
X Rays
Ultra Violet Rays

We know nothing of these from our own experiences.

There are also a number of mutationally potent chemicals, among the better known are:

Colchicine
Indole Acetic Acid

Our experiences with the best known inducer, Colchicine, have not proved too satisfactory. If you use any of them be sure you follow the manufacture's directions. However, we believe the best results come through natural mutations.

There are undoubtedly a great many other inducers of mutations. Some selectors seem to think that insect injury may bring about structural changes in plant life.

This is an unnamed science, open to all plant lovers. African Violets mutate very freely, and as they can be propagated from the leaf, they offer an excellent medium for the study of selecting. It is one field where no one can tell you what can or cannot be done. It remains for you to find out for yourself. Possibly the lack of a great deal of biological knowledge will prove to be a help rather than a hindrance.

As long as plants have been under cultivation, either as food or as ornamentals, there have been people who have made selections of plants. Their view was, and still is, to obtain better fruiting, growing or some other desirable change. Their selections may have been mutations or merely an improved strain. To our way of thinking, it is a mutation or new variety, even though it may carry many characteristics of the parent plant. There are no doubt a great number of plants under culti vation that the true parent plant is not known. I remember not long ago reading a news article that the parent plant of corn had been found in the State of New Mexico. Up until then the parent plant of maize had not been known. What we are leading up to is that there have been selectors and breeders of plants for a long, long time. The selectors preceded the hybridist for many generations, and yet, as far as I know, no name has ever been given this art. It certainly must be an art or science, even though it may be practiced by the layman as well as the learned. Dad says he can recall several instances during the last fifty years where selecting has been done by people with no scientific knowledge what-so-ever. He recalls very vividly his grandfather letting the first bunch and polebeans ripen on the vine to use for seed the next year.

Through this practice he grew excellent beans and his seed were sought after by his neighbors because of their earlier fruiting habits. He remembers his own father in his watermelon patch always allowing the largest melons to mature for seed. He built up a strain of melons that on good soil would weigh as high as ninety pounds each. Some fifty years later, I have read on numerous occasions newspaper articles of melons this size attracting a great deal of attention. All this may seem very distant from African Violets, but it is merely to show that there have been selectors of plant life possibly as long as man has been on this earth.

A few plants among thousands may make very slight change, and still fewer may make great changes. These changes may be caused by the reasons already outlined in the foregoing part of this talk. There are probably tens of thousands of mutations that are never found because of the nature of their growth or the method of propagation. The African Violet, as all of you know, is propagated from the leaf cutting and a great many of them are removed from portions of the plant that has never bloomed. This part of the plant has no doubt been subjected to a great deal of shock from over watering, under watering, not enough fertilizer, too much fertilizer, and other shocks too numerous to mention. To our way of thinking, some of these shocks are transferred to the leaves which could, and we believe do, cause some change in the cell structure of at least part of the plants. In the selection of these leaves, we have been able to assist nature in the creation of some rather dwarf plants as well as some plants with different shaped leaves. Some of these have also carried both color and size change in the blooms. We think that malformed leaves, whether caused from spray burn, fertilizer burn, insect wounds or other inqury, also induce or cause change in the cell structure. We are relatively sure that this is a source of mutations

We have a violet we call "Raggedy Ann" that originated from a malformed leaf. We had this in both blue and pink, but, as there were so many different shaped leaves, we killed many of them because we thought they were infested with some insect or disease. At the present time, we have only the pink blooming, and hope that one of the others will be blue. We have also been able, through observation to select leaves that produce foliage much improved over the parent plant. By observing the formation of the flowers, and selecting leaves around the flower stem we have been able to help create a new flower. In a flower that is different from the other flowers on the plant, we make every effort to root this flower stem also. It is a practice with us, - however, it may be mostly theory, - that if we are trying to perpetuate a flower sport, we propagate the full leaf without removing any of the petiole. If we are trying to perpetuate a leaf change, we remove the petiole even into the leaf. Now, members, get that leaf into your bottle of water. In other words our theory is that the point of inception of a leaf change is in the leaf, not in the stem. And that the inception of a bloom change is in the trunk of the plant. We will have to let the biologist or scientist prove this, because it takes too many labels and too much writing for us. After all, it is the new plants we are after and not rules for posterity to follow. As we see it, when you get a new plant, your work has only begun. We can show you several hundred plants with hardly any two carrying the same blooms or foliage, but most of these, while better than the parent plant, are not yet different enough to warrant a new name.

We do not question, while on this subject, that there will be a yellow violet, and it may be in the not too distant future.

In concluding, I would like to invite all of you to visit our greenhouses when you are in our section of the country. We are closed on Saturday afternoon and Sunday, but if you will let us know you are coming, we will be glad to arrange to be at home.

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ORIGINATION OF NEW AND IMPROVED VARIETIES OF AFRICAN VIOLETS THRU PROCESSES OF HYBRIDIZATION AND SEEDING.

William Merkel

(Mr. Merkel very kindly provided the editor with the following brief of his talk at the Cincinnati Meeting April 29 and 30.)

There are only two ways in which it is possible to get new varieties of violets. One is by a variety developing a sport or mutant, and the other is by hybridization. Since the discussion is about hybridizing, we will not consider the matter of sports, but it is well to keep in mind that some of our best and most interesting varieties have occurred as "sports", and this is a very important way of getting new varieties.

The actual mechanics of hybridization is so well described by Clarissa Harris in her article on "Botanical Analysis and Method of Pollination", that I would only be wasting valuable time repeating information with which we should all be well acquainted.

PRE-DETERMINED OBJECTIVES

There should be a reason for each cross before it is actually made. In other words you should have a definite objective in mind. Do not make crosses in a haphazard way with only the thought of getting seed, but go about it in a systematic and intelligent manner, Before crossing ask yourself what you are actually trying to attain, then carefully pick your parent plants and try to incorporate their best qualities.

The flower, to be sure, is important. Carefully consider its size, color, position, or unusualness. An ideal plant should have a dark green, heavy quality foliage, with preferably a red coloring underneath. Or, perhaps you desire a foliage that is scalloped or serrated or even cupped. Not least in importance is the habit of growth of the plant. Always, if possible, select vigorous plants that appear fast growing and more disease resistant.

PLANTS AFTER CROSSING

The general care of a seed plant does not differ to any great extent. Be sure to start off with clean healthy plants free of mite and thrips. It is well to keep all flowers pulled off the seed plants and to check daily for rotted petioles that may start the pedicel bearing the seed pod to rot. The seed plants may be repotted later, if necessary, without danger of losing the seed. The seed will ripen in four to six months.

COLLECTING AND STORING

The seed pod should be removed when it changes to a brown color and starts to shrivel up. Be sure to take the pedicel with the pod and store in a dry place until the seed has completely dried. Then take the seed from the pod and again store in a dry place until ready for sowing. It is very important to avoid keeping the seed where there is excessive humidity.

SOWING SEED

Sowing seed is like baking a cake. Most every grower does it differently but usually with good results. We prefer the following method with violets.

We use only Canadian Peat Moss, for the following reasons - (1) less trouble with damping off due to fungus, (2) even moisture content, (3) has some food value which is an advantage over vermiculite.

I will briefly outline our method. Use either Azalea or bulb pots (easier to water). Fill to one inch from top with screened peat. Soak thoroughly with water. Sow seed lightly and evenly and then cover with a very thin layer of dry peat moss, just enough to barely cover seed. Do not water again as capillary action will moisten dry peat on top. Cover with one sheet of newspaper until seed starts to germinate (approximately two weeks) then remove paper. Until germination keep peat moist by watering from bottom Don't keep saturated with water, but also do not allow peat to become dry. This is very important as germinated seed can easily dry up in a day or two.

When seed has germinated and appears above the peat be sure to avoid drafts which may cause damping off (rotting due to fungus growth). We have been able to check this when it starts by one application of potassium permanganate at the rate of 1 oz. to 4 gal. of water.

TRANSPLANTING

After the seedlings have appeared above the peat they are transplanted into flats in about 4 to 6 weeks depending on the time of the year. In any case they should be taken out of the pots just as soon as they are large enough to handle.

We use a mixture of one half leaf mold and one half soil for the first transplanting and do not incorporate any inorganic fertilizer in the soil at this time. We space our seedlings about 2" apart and leave them in the flats until they touch leaves. They are then potted into 2" pots.

Your soil should always be sterilized to avoid crown rot and nematodes. Also spray your plants regularly. Always keep in mind that the purpose of spraying is not to clean up an infestation but to prevent one.

We are all aware of the numerous varieties of violets and duplicate names of those varieties on the market today and the general confusion of it all. Our Society is doing a splendid job of sorting out the duplicates and in the near future we should have it pretty well cleared up.

Continued Page 29

MY PRIZE PLANT

Bettye Boyette

My African Violet RED HEAD that won "Best In The Show" prize at our Memphis and Shelby County African Violet Spring Show is less than one year old and measures nineteen and three quarters inches across. I bought the cutting (known as a sucker cutting) the first of last May and it had just been taken off the parent plant; therefore, it did not have any roots. I placed it in a small pot of sand and the rooting time took about two or three weeks. When it began to show signs of growing I put it in a pot of soil consisting of 1 part sterilized humus, one part sand and one part peat moss. I also use charcoal in the bottom of all my violet pots.

I started watering this plant as well as all my other violets with sterilized liquid sheep fertilizer, which I made by taking a gallon glass jar and filling it about one third full of fertilizer . I then fill the jar with warm water and let it set twenty four hours before using any of the water. By that time the dry fertilizer has become water soaked and has settled to the bottom of the jar, leaving the brown liquid on top. I have a quart jar which I use for watering. I fill this jar a little over half full of this brown liquid and finish filling the jar with warm water, as I never water my violets with cold water. I then take a small flower bulb syringe and go around the edge of the pot and between the leaf stems, watering until a little of the water soaks through to the bottom of the pot. I water all my violets this way, and keep a small sponge in my hand so, if any of the water does happen to get on the leaves or stems, I can immediately soak it up with the sponge.

I water my violets with this solution about every ten days, and each time I draw off some fresh fertilizer water for my plants, I fill the jar again with warm water and let it set until time to use it again. When the water ceases to be a dark brown color, I know that all the good part of that water has been used and that it is time to start over again with fresh fertilizer.

I make up a warm Ivory soap suds every two weeks and use a small sponge to gently scrub each leaf and stem. Then I turn the warm water on very slowly and gently rinse the soap off the leaves, soaking up all the water that clings to the leaves with a clean sponge.

I use Vitamin B1 every two weeks in warm water, watering all plants from the top of the pot, and I am happy to say that, by being very careful, I have not had a casualty yet.

I keep my violets in the house and try to keep the same temperature with moisture. All my violets were kept in the South windows all winter while there was little heat from the sun, but now I have moved them to the East windows, where they get the early morning sun. I have never had an insect or disease on any of my plants.

African Violets, White Waterlily $1.50; White Pixie $1.00. 5 new doubles. Old Lace, Duponts, Amazons and other new varieties. Send for list.

Mrs. T. C. Bee, Rt. 3, Newnan, Ga.

Origination of New and Improved Varieties Cont. from Page 28

In closing it brings to my mind the old saying the "there is no child like my child". To be sure, we are all proud of our own violet seedlings, and especially so, if they appear to be just a little different. However, before we put them on the market, let us be a little more critical of ourselves and be sure that we are introducing either something outstanding or different or at least a definite improvement on some existing variety. If we all do that I am sure, as collectors, we will be making our hobby a more interesting one.

SAINTPAULIA

Alex Laurie

Native habitat
- High humidity - 60-70%
- High temperature - 65°
- Soil high in organic matter
- Shade

Home Conditions
- Normally
- Low humidity - 10-25%
- High temperature - 75°
- Fluctuating -
- Gas conditions
- Too much or too little light

Important that native habitat conditions be approximated.

Propagation
- Mediums - sharp sand
  vermiculite
  sand and peat
- Soak leaves - 5 min. in colloidal or wettable sulphur (3 teaspoons to gallon) to reduce mite.
- Bottom heat - 65°-70°
- Hormones hasten rooting (shake off surplus)
- Takes 4-8 weeks before potting.

Soil Mixture - Fine roots (coarse soil)
- 2 soil
- 1 sand and well rotted manure
- 2 leafmold (coarse)
- pH - 6.5
- Nitrate 10 ppm
- Phosphorus 5 ppm
- Potassium 10 ppm
- Calcium 150 ppm

Sterilize with steam against nematodes. Use pressure cooker to generate steam.

Shifting from 2½-4 inch pots - use same mixture.

Fertilize only after roots show on outside of ball. Then use a complete fertilizer (1 teaspoon to 1 quart) every 2 weeks. In mixing soil add 1 teaspoon of 4-12-4 to 2 quarts of soil.

Can use various named liquid fertilizers.

Watering - Overhead or subirrigation

If use plastic or glazed pots - water overhead.

If use porous clay pots - subirrigate, let drain and empty saucer.

Wick watering or constant level watering should be used with more care.

Water should be heated to 65°-70° if used overhead to avoid ring spot.

If subirrigated, colder water may be used. If watering in the morning, cold water is alright overhead (leaf temperature is low then).

Humidity - maintain as high as possible
- Pans, fine mist, air conditioning.

Light
- No direct sun - East or North window year round. West and South - fall and spring.
- Need 400-800 footcandles.
- 400 f.c. will grow.
- 600-800 f.c. will flower.
- Use light meter.

Aeration - Don't keep in too close an atmosphere.

Temperature - 60°-65° constant. May go to 70°.

Troubles
- Drop of flowers - gas leaks.
- For thrips - use DDT, Isotox, Parathion (precautions)
- Wilting of lower leaves - overwatering.
- Mite - curling leaves on center, greyish appearance. Use Thiocide, sulphur, sodium selenate (1 oz. to 30 gal.), wash off foliage.
- Mealybugs - Parathion dust (Use with great care in home), Azobenzene dust.
- Nematodes - soil sterilization Parathion (4 lbs. to 100 gal.)
- Very long petiole - to dark overwatering.

Failure to flower
1. Too dark
2. Too many leaves in center
3. Overwatering
4. Overpotting
5. Fluctuating temperature
6. Gases

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THE NEW DUPONT VIOLETS

John Good

The new duPont Violets will be distributed for the first time during the fall of 1949. This will be welcome news to those who have long awaited this event. It will be doubly welcome to those of us who have had to turn down the many requests of our friends until we could propagate and adequate supply for distribution.

Since the original duPont Blue and Lavendar Pink varieties were introduced, Mrs. Wm. K. duPont continued an intensive program of hybridization and selection for a number of years. Recognizing that the strain had inherent qualities not possessed by existing varieties, Mrs. duPont maintained a rigorous standard of perfection and only those seedlings of superior merit were used in her breeding program. The resulting seedlings showed a continuing improvement over the original varieties, and after a period of years, a very noticeable increase in size of flowers and range of colors could be observed.

In 1947, Mrs. duPont decided to disseminate her best seedlings thru a commercial firm and we, fortunately, were selected for this undertaking. Realizing that a large quantity of plants would be required for the introductory offer, we deterred the introduction until we had assembled a considerable supply.

The first hybrids to be introduced are in five shades of blue and one shade of pink. In each particular group there is a variation in the foliage but the colors are constant. These are as follows:

duPont Blue #1. Extremely dark blue.
duPont Blue #2. Dark blue. Lighter than #1.

duPont Blue #3. Medium blue. Lighter than #2.

duPont Blue #4. Light violet blue. Lighter than #3.

duPont Blue #5. Pale blue. Lighter than #4.

duPont Silver Pink. Light lavendar pink with silver overcast.

The distinguishing characteristics of the new duPont hybrids are numerous but may be grouped in three major classifications.

1. Increased size of flowers. Under ideal conditions on mature plants we have noted flowers measuring two and one half inches across. All of the new hybrids produce flowers of larger size than any existing varieties.

2. Improvement in color. A wide range in shades of blue has been produced. Colors are intense and of great clarity.

3. Increased size and beauty of foliage. It may truly be said that, if the new hybrids did not flower, they would be grown solely for the beauty of the foliage. Leaves of immense size are produced on mature plants in a symmetrical fashion.

It is difficult to speak of the new duPonts in anything but superlatives. They are truly the aristocrats among Violets and have created sensational interest. Due to the increase in vigor of the plants, they are easy to grow and will reward everyone with a profusion of flowers.

We are continuing a hybridization program and numerous improvements are appearing in our present group of seedlings. These will be rigorously selected and only those plants of superior merit will be saved for future dissemination.

The duPont Hybrids attain perfection when grown in five and six inch pots. Due to the size of the plants. we recommend a more liberal use of fertilizers, especially in mature plants.

It is our opinion that the new duPont Violets will give impetus to the popularity of the African Violet to an extent beyond our fondest dreams. Of one point we are certain - a great many Violet lovers will derive increased satisfaction in growing their deservedly favorite flower.

AUTOMATIC WATERING FOR YOUR AFRICAN VIOLETS

Send 45¢ for one Glaswick, holder saucer and instructions (3 for $1.25) or 50¢ for 3 wicks only - postpaid. Use your own pots. System recommended by Dr. Post of Cornell. Remarkable results.

ATLAS ASBESTOS COMPANY
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ATLANTA SHOW

An African Violet Show, under the auspices of the H. G. Hastings Co. will be held in their store October 14 and 15 in Atlanta, Georgia.

LOST MEMBER

Mr. Harold F. Thompson, 26680 Evergreen Rd., Birmingham, Mich.

PUT DOWN A LEAF

OR

THE CURSE OF AN ARDENT COLLECTOR

Regina and Warren Gottshall

"Put down a leaf" was part of a bit of advice received several years back. The rest of it ran like this, and we quote, "I do hope that you will get the leaf habit - propagation is one of the most fascinating parts of being a violet collector. - - You simply must learn to grow leaves successfully. Buy a few new leaves and grow plants for exchange". This advice came, not in its entirety as noted above, but rather has been extracted from a series of letters received over the course of several months. These kind (?) words were accepted with reverence and adopted with a vengeance — adding a few innovations of our own.

Does all this sound familiar? Are you beginning to see the truth behind these words? They are in reality only a mirror's reflections of the joys, plights, and predicaments of every Saintpaulia fancier who has ever "put down a leaf".

First of all you start out, as every "collector" has, with Blue Boy (the plant, of course, being identified ages after you acquired it from the local florist) and probably, if you considered yourself lucky at the time, a "pink" and a "white". Then along comes the above advice accompanied with the remark that "African violets are so easy to raise from leaf". So - you take your creative genius in hand and pinch off a leaf or two; carefully prepare a cheese glass of water with the prescribed waxed paper over it, held in place by a rubber band, and then punch in the paper the required number of holes. After seemingly countless ages you see the fine, white, hairlike roots appear. Oh joy! Oh joy! After another seeming decade, you see wee plants appearing at the base of the stem (you, of course, have not been enlightened as yet to the word "petiole"). Out comes the leaf and its young, born in the light of day, and you plunk it into a pot of dirt (the pot is probably too big and the dirt too heavy) and within a day or two the whole thing has rotted ignobly. This procedure is tried over and over again - because African violet collectors are brave and persistent souls - then comes the day when SUCCESS is your's. From this time on leaves are pinched recklessly and each clumsy accident of your own, or that of the dog, or your offspring, presents you with a few more leaves for propagating (simply because you cannot bear to throw the "dear things" away). You have rapidly built up a "collection" of small plants that you "just love to watch grow".

Everything is lovely up to this time, BUT, just about here you hear of that grand lady, Miss Marion Thomas and her Round Robins (or lately the Society's own grand "boid", the Pigeon). You join! The first real thing you discover is that leaves should never be started in water but in peat. You try that - with the above discouraging results at first but you finally succeed with this method. Then the thing to use is vermiculite (whatever that is), ditto, etc. The fact that you were, by this time, having practically 100% success with the water method has nothing to do with it, for you have graduated from being a mere creative genius into being an experimenter as well.

To your surprise you now learn that everyone has a Blue Boy so you have to keep all your lovely young plants yourself. You are further enlightened to the fact that the pink is Pink Beauty and the white is White Lady and both are patented varieties and thus prohibited by law from being propagated except by holders of permits. Now you either shrink every time you see a lawyer's name mentioned in the newspaper. or you do get yourself a permit - just prior to discovering that everyone has White Lady and Pink Beauty.

By this time you have made considerable progress as a propagator and become an "expert", so begin to further your collection abilities and the varieties soon mount up (a leaf being taken from each new one as it arrives). Finally comes the Day of Days when you manage, by bribery, coercion or your Old Age Pension, to secure a dime sized leaf of Marine. "Now", you say to yourself "I really have got something to do some swapping with". You "put down the leaf", nurse it motherly, and as you are really proficient by this time, manage to raise a crop of plants - or one. You are now ready to swap, either leaves of the "one" or wee plants of the "crop". Oh joy! Oh joy! (After all, Life is just one joy after the other.) You take your pen, pencil, or typewriter in hand and write countless letters offering to swap Marine for "What have you?". Remember your horror when you discovered that, while you were raising the plant from the tencent piece, everyone else had done so, too.

The pitiful state has come. You sit down in your bewilderment and view the confusion about you. There are so many violets in the windows there is no possible chance of fading the rug; the radiator tops are laden, the dinner table, the buffet, the stairway to the second floor, the enclosed porch that became a dire necessity, the plant-house (or greenhouse) built at the price of your child's college education. You finally realize that you should throw them all out (you are merely momentarily discouraged), or at least part of them. But - where to start? You love Trilby, Orchid

Beauty and Mary Wac, and Heaven help you, you realize, if you ever lose the labels on them. Mentor Boy and Bicolor are such wonderful bloomers! Neptune and Commodore (or is that Commander or Dickson's Purple?) have such lovely leaves. And, even if each one of your Ionanthas has a different name, they are still wonderful. (In the meantime, you accidentally break off another leaf while watering and unconsciously plunk it down in your favorite rooting medium that you are "experimenting" with at the moment.)

Finally the undeniable day arrives when you are faced with either of these facts - the lady from the Welfare is waiting outside to take you "over the hills to the poorhouse" or, someone OFFERS you a Red duPont and you haven't the smallest fraction of an inch in which to put it.

Put down a leaf? Yes, but do it with restraint - for a definite purpose. Put down only what you know you can dispose of or to replace an old plant that has become straggly or worn out. Be strong enough to discard accidentally broken leaves. Keep space for the new and good varieties that are being and will be originated. Be honest enough to recognize a variety that is inferior and duplications where they occur and practial enough to discard them immediately. Both collecting and propagating are joys, but only so long as we do not go to extremes. Be methodical - not just a creature of habit. Put down a leaf - but wisely.

(Famous last words - "Do as I say, not as I do".)

Saintpaulia Growers

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The long awaited Hybrid DuPonts are now available. The complete set of leaves, numbered from One to Six, No. 1 being the darkest blue and No. 5 the lightest and Silver Pink at $3.00 a set of leaves or 60¢ a leaf. Plants at $2.50 each or $12.00 a complete set. Amazons in every variety, Waterlily, and my own introduction - - - Tunia's Cleveland Indian. Add 50¢ for postage and packing on orders of less than $3.00.
Send stamped envelope for complete list.

LET'S VISIT

Let's visit with Charlotte Hughes in Huntington, West Virginia, and see her "Violet Playhouse". May we caution, though, against "doing as we did". Courtesy is a valuable virtue and has bought entree where gold would not.

We arrived after nine one evening; were met at the train by husband Charlie, resplendent in a bow-tie with electric lights (one red and one green), and driven to the Hughes' home. We did have the courtesy to "warn" them ahead of time that we were coming. Before going further, and because we can hear you saying "What manner of man is Mr. Hughes?", we will elaborate about the electrified bow-tie, There is a definite place in a written introduction to the Hughes for the bow-tie, for it gives you early knowledge of what to expect. We went prepared with a supply of handkerchiefs and a towel or two for we had been there before and knew what to expect. Charlie Hughes is a joy in this life, with a main purpose of making people happy through laughter. While there, we laughed until tears streamed down our faces and cramps doubled our stomachs. Anything further about Mr. Hughes would be overdoing it, so from now on, he is yours to discover and enjoy.

Your visit will have formalities and a few of the courtesies of life with introductions at the door and a quiet but impatient chat in the living room. (If Mrs. Hughes is not at home, Mr. Charlie will take you to the "playhouse" and appear as enlightened as to their care and identity as is his wife.) We barged in the front door, paraded through the house and came to a halt only at the door of the greenhouse (built by Mr. Hughes as a playhouse for his wife and her violets), and then simply because of awe. If you have any love for Saintpaulias, the scene is breath-taking You will not believe it. We had to sleep on it (after coffee and ham sandwiches out there until midnight) and spend another day to enjoy just part of it.

Size of this wonderland? Not what you would think or expect from the above. It is a lean-to type 13 x 16 built onto a porch. This porch is, of course, also utilized and enlarges the over-all space. Benches are built around the sides and through the middle. Additional space is provided by the erection of 12 inch glass shelves raised every 13 inches above the benches and more shelves are hung over the center benches on a pipe frame suspended from the ceiling. Not an inch is wasted but even so it is inadequate by about 500 square feet. One neat trick you will notice is that the larger plants are raised above the benches by placing them upon up-turned pots. This affords space for their spread and allows additional space in the benches. As all Mrs. Hughes' plants are watered from above, this does not present a problem.

How many plants are housed in the "playhouse"? We have no idea, for in addition to the large collection of named varieties, there must be close to 1000 seedlings. It is the latter plants that will attract your attention, with the exception of a few named plants and they only because of their size: - such plants as Blue Bird with a spread of 18 inches, leaf blades 3½ inches wide by 4 inches long and My Second Prize with a spread of 22" and the leaf blades 3¾ by 4 inches. (Incidentally, we have recently seen three plants that were identical; one, the above Second Prize, another labeled Summer Skies and the third Merkel's Brilliant. There is no claim presented here that these three varieties are one and the same, it is merely that we are at a loss as to which of the plants are incorrectly named.)

After collecting African violets for fifteen years, Mrs. Hughes decided to try her hand at raising seedlings and used, for most of her start, the contents of two seed pods from Purple Beauty. The resulting plants are as beautiful as any named variety and a few were, in our opinion, a bit superior.

One quick walk about the place and we were immediately attracted to one particular plant. A lovely blue bloom on very dark shiny foliage, broadly ovate with rounded tip and bent edges. The plant (tentatively named Blue Dream, pending test and registration) is quite compact and bears blooms in clusters of 7 to 8 per very short stem, borne in a nest just above the center of the plant. In color the flower ranges between VB 3 and BV3. It was the most outstanding plant we had seen for a long time - being at least as dark as McFarland's Blue Warrior but with smoother foliage.

Two other plants that bear mention at this time are her Red Surprise and Painted Ballerina (also tentatively named pending registration). Red Surprise was named because it was just that. Mrs. Hughes had found it in full bloom high on a top shelf. The plant habit is droopy; leaf edges wavy, broadly spade shaped and of a glossy, medium olive green color. Leaf edges are a lighter shade and older mature leaves take on this lighter cast. Blooms are borne in clusters of 7 to 11 and it is very prolific with its airy flowers on long erect stems. The buds open quite dark with light patches at the joints of the lobes and the mature flowers seem to take in the entire range from RV 3 to VR 1, with a purple eye at the tube and the more rose shades at the edges.

Painted Ballerina has typical and beautiful "girl" type foliage but the blooms - to make use of a shopworn phrase are, "out of this world". It is really a "painted" bicolor. The two top lobes, standing upright and much separated from the three rounded lower lobes are a shade darker than VR 1, as are the tips of the lower lobes whose centers are pencilled in a general color about RV 5. The foliage is deeply and evenly crenated with light edges - diminishing somewhat from the base to the tip. The large cream spot at the axil of the leaf is branched with the veins.

Mrs. Hughes' Rose of Trallee needs no introduction here for it was exhibited in all its glory at the convention in Cincinnati. Most amazing of all this beauty - to us at least - was the fact that these plants were but 10 months old when we saw them and compared in size and flourescence with all her older plants. Charlotte's statement that her first blooms appeared when the seedlings were but 3½ months old was checked by very reliable sources. We had previously seen them when they were 2 month old and their size was beyond comprehension. If you can imagine a collection of seedlings whose foliages range from light yellowed green to dark brassiness, from compactness to light spreading airyness, whose blooms take in the general accepted color range for Saintpaulias, then you will know the sight to be expected.

Naturally, the reason for this wonderful success must be discovered, and fortunately, there is no secret about it. Charlotte will tell anyone merely for the asking, as she does not think it anything unusual as to preparation or application. Start with preparation for the seed - low pots, 6 or 8 inches across, are first sterilized with boiling water; filled three-fourths full of agricultural peat and more boiling water poured through that, then fine vermiculite (through a flour seive) is spread on top. The vermiculite absorbs moisture from the scalded peat and is set aside until cool. Seed is spread on top, by tapping the paper that contains them for even distribution, and not pressed into the mica. Cover with a sheet of glass and set in an East or North window. (Mrs. Hughes advises that her sowings received about an hour and a half morning sun during the month of June). Moisture is wiped from the glass as it collects.

"Never let the seed bed dry out" Charlotte advises, "but keep a little water in the saucer in which the pot stands." When seedlings are three to four weeks old raise one side of the glass by using a pot label or piece of lattice to permit access of fresh air. Seedlings are moved when they develop one leaf large enough to get hold of to pull them from the soil.

Transplanting is done into flats 18 x 20 inches with plenty of drainage holes bored in the bottom. Add peat moss, scald then add about 1½ inches of vermiculite. Small furrows were made in the vermiculite by pressure of a narrow wood slat. Fill furrows, which are very small, with Vitaloam. Mrs. Hughes uses an ear syringe to dampen the Vitaloam with Hyponex solution (1 teaspoon to a gallon of warm water). The point of a knife is used for the "holes" into which the small seedlings are planted. Vermiculite is gently pressed about them and then they are "settled" by the Hyponex solution from the syringe. They are planted fairly close - 150 per flat. Mrs.

Hughes' flats were moved out-doors, covered with glass at night and with glass and paper during the day, if the sun reached their location. They were covered during rainy weather. At all times, when the glass was over the flats, it was kept raised with pieces of wood for ventilation.

Further transplantng was done from flat to flat whenever the leaves started to touch. The same content of peat moss and vermiculite was used each time and always scalded. By this method 27 flats were eventually filled. When the plants reached a spread of about four inches they were planted permanently into four inch pots. No smaller pots were used at any time. Each transplanting received its watering of the Hyponex solution.

Final potting mixture contains the following:-

1 bu. peat moss
2 bu. leaf mold (woods soil)
1 lb. bone meal
½ lb. Sacco or Vigoro
¼ bu. well rotted cow or sheep manure.

All is screened through hardware cloth with the fine rootlets put pack into the soil to be used. Mrs. Hughes advises the use of Canadian or Michigan peat, rather than humus, as the latter "packs and you have a moldy pot." The mixture is turned onto a concrete slab and sprayed with water until it has a fine velvety feel from turning and aeration "not wet, just alive with active bacteria."

Pots are then arranged in a pan about 2 to 3 inches deep; drainage placed in the bottom, "Never lay a piece of crocking flat but raise it on the edge of another piece", Charlotte cautions. Fill with the soil mixture and pour boiling water over the lot and cover with newspaper until cool. Set plants that have not previously been watered.

You now have the prescription for "SUCCESS". at least for Charlotte Hughes.

Naturally it took a letter after we returned home to inquire of her "favorite named variety". "Neptune", she replied, "with its tailored look, smooth finish and ideal blossom".

We admit that in this introduction to Charlotte Hughes we forgot - Charlotte Hughes. The accompanying photograph will have to make this introduction for us, and a visit to the "Violet Playhouse" will prove our contention that she is someone you have known all your life. You will realize that here it is not just a case of "green thumb" but rather of complete "know-how". You will come away starry eyed but loving both Mr. and Mrs. Hughes - and the seedlings. "The Visitors"

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This is the ideal medium for African violet culture - - - used for all our plants. Excellent for re-potting. Treated with SOILENE for control of springtail and thrip in the soil. One package will re-pot 3 to 8 plants. Order today; Large size package $1.00 postpaid ($1.25 West of Chicago) (No C O D s.) Write for our African violet circular.

VIRDANS FARMS
Box 123-L Phelps, N. Y.

YOUR HINT HUNTER

Phyllis Ferrall
Rt. 5, Box 551
Battle Creek, Mich.

Here is your old Hint Hunter again, and I suppose the memories of our convention still linger with those fortunate enough to attend.

Now it is September and we are all working diligently to get our violets in proper condition for winter.

The humidity must be watched closely. Don't forget it is tricky at this time of year.

I am trying the following feeding system which I learned at the Convention on three of my plants:

1st week feed Vitamin B1
2nd week feed Super Phosphate
3rd week feed Vitamin B1
4th week feed Kem or Hyponex
5th week feed B1
6th week feed Sheep Tea (my own idea) then start all over again.

I have been afraid it is too much feeding so I am feeding only three plants thusly.

The thought of cold weather brings to our attention the starting of small plants in the basement without heat. Lucille Peck has used this method successfully: Take large metal trays and place pots as close as possible in them. Box over completely with a cardboard carton, extra large ones, so your trays will be entirely enclosed. Cut a hole about 6 x 6 inches in top and place a small window glass over hole, so you can see at a glance if your lights are working at all times. It is well to have a small thermometer in each box to tell the temperature correctly. Now with this method, you must use a thermostat with a 40 or 60 watt bulb on an extension. The control keeps it at a proper heat.

I have seen this work and her plants are beautiful.

We have always insisted that African Violets shed their lower leaves when they become old. But scientists now say they have discovered that soluble salts collected on the rims of clay pots cause the death of leaf stems. One solution for this is to place wax paper or paper doilies around the rim of the pot to prevent leaves or petioles touching.

Mrs. O. C. Trinkle of Louisville, Ky., makes cardboard collars for her pots and is thrilled with the results.

I have tried all of these and I believe I am quite sold on Mrs. Erwin Richter's (of Cincinnati, Ohio) little trick of placing a strip of aluminum foil around the top of each rim. It doesn't take up the moisture like the other materials and it looks quite gay as well as successfully keeping the leaves away from the pot rims.

Dr. Laurie tells us not to fertilize baby plants. He says nitrogen is bad for tiny ones.

Mrs. C. T. Hughes of Huntington, W. Va., uses Hyponex to water her baby plants and she raises outstanding seedlings.

Editors Note:
When writing to Mrs. Ferrall, please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your reply.

AFRICAN VIOLETS

For "something new" in your collection, we are pleased to offer a new series of DuPont hybrids in our Fall catalog.

Most outstanding of these DuPont hybrids is the "DUPONT SILVER PINK" - a light lavender pink with silver overcast - $2.50.

Illustrated catalog free - send today!

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CLUB NEWS

NEW CALIFORNIA SOCIETY

The new chapter formed during February 1949 in San Gabriel Valley of the African Violet Society, closed its charter on June 24, 1949 with forty-seven active members. The officers to serve are: Mrs. Ernest Mackey, President; Mrs. J. Nelson Walters, First Vice President and Program Chairman; Mrs. Robert Schrecengost, Second Vice President and Ways and Means Chairman; Mrs. Morris Skadrin, Recording Secretary, Mrs. Ernest Ruebel, Treasurer; and Mrs. G. Leslie Davis, Publicity; Mrs. T. J. Banks, Corresponding Secretary.

On June 25, 1949 this new group acted as host and hostess to the Los Angeles, Manhatten, Long Beach, Bay City and Santa Monica, Chapters at a pot luck luncheon. The tables were decorated in yellow and green with potted Saintpaulias as the center pieces. Tiny nut cups with five African violets made in color was clipped to each cup. Mrs. Mackey, the president announced that luck numbers were placed on the bottom of several nut cups for the many prizes given out on this occasion. This was voted a unique way of drawing and much fun and excitement was had. Garden tours to growers of African violets were made during the afternoon especially enjoyed was the Wonder Gardens owned by Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Banks, both members of this society.

Thousands of plants in all stages were on display. This is the largest retail display room of African violets in Southern California. During all regular meetings of this chapter, violet leaves and plants are on dsplay and for sale to the small collector.

Mrs. Holmes Harris, Regional Director, guest speaker of the day highlighted the National Convention, held recently in Cincinnati, Ohio. Meetings adjourned during the summer months.

LANSING MICHIGAN CLUB

From Lansing, Michigan, comes word that a club was organized there on March 9, 1949, and has grown to a membership of 25. The first meetings were held in the homes, but as the membership grew, it was decided to hold the meetings in the social rooms of the East Michigan Fire Station. This will enable the club to expand without any limit of members.

Officers for this group are:
President, Mrs. Edwin Anderson
1st Vice-President, Mrs. Lester Nichols
2nd Vice President, Mrs. Stanley Peck
Recording Secy., Mrs. Rollin Hare
Treasurer, Mrs. Earl Bugbee.

Send Club News to —
Maxine Wangberg
1920 W. 3rd St.
Perry, Iowa.

COLUMBUS SOCIETY

On March 23, eighteen African violet enthusiasts met at the Parkview Hotel in Columbus, Ohio, for the purpose of organizing a local Violet Society. Committees were appointed, the name chosen and definite meeting dates were decided upon.

The first official meeting of the Columbus African Violet Society was held on April 20th, and the charter closed with a membership of 31.

The following officers were named for the year,

President, Mrs. Carlos Evans
Vice-President, Mrs. Terry Dixon
Treasurer, Mrs. Dan Letherman
Recording Secy., Mrs. E. B. Caldwell
Corres. Secy., Mrs. J. N. Howard
Asst. Corres. Secy., Mrs. L. A. Minnick
Reporter, Mr. B. G. Seeds.

Plans are being made for an African violet show in the near future.

NASHVILLE CLUB

The Nashville African Violet Club was organized on February 8, 1949, at the home of Mrs. Charles Rochedieu, with a charter membership of 30.

Officers elected were:
President, Mrs. Alex Taylor
Vice-President, Mrs. Charles Rochedieu
Recording Secy., Mrs. P. L. Smith
Treasurer, Mr. S. H. Wilhoite
Corresponding Secy., Mrs. R. H. Pride

By laws were read and plans for the coming year were made. A round table discussion on problems pertaining to African violet culture and care was then held.

Committee chairman were named as follows:

Program, Mrs. Charles Rochedieu
Shows, Mrs. Sam Nichols
Telephone, Mrs. J. C. Bamford
Philanthropy, Mrs. R. L. McCracken.

WEBSTER GROVES SOCIETY

On February 10, 1949, the Webster Groves, Mo. Chapter of the African Violet Society was organized. The membership was limited to 24 to enable the members to meet in the homes.

Officers for this club are:
Mrs. Carl F. Schroeder, President
Mrs. T. M. Farris, Vice-President
Mrs. A. E. Zimmerman,, Secretary
Mrs. A. W. Greve, Treasurer.

An African violet display was shown at the Webster Grove Garden show held in the Masonic Temple on May 14 & 15, 1949.

TENNESSEE VALLEY AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB

Fifty-two charter members are listed in the newly organized Tennessee Valley African Violet Club which held its initial meeting May 10th.

The Club was sponsored by the Knoxville Saintpaulia Society and elected the following officers for the year:

President — Mrs. J. W. Smouse
First V. Pres. — Mrs. Manus Sharp
Second V. Pres. — Mrs. Lloyd Johnson
Corr. Sec'y — Mrs. W. S. Kennedy, Sr.
Recording Sec'y — Mrs. D. S. Turner
Treasurer — Mrs. W. L. Strange

Meetings are held the second Tuesday in each month at Sear's Club room.

LONG BEACH SOCIETY

In November, 1948, the Long Beach African Violet Society was formally organized, and in January, 1949, the following officers were elected for the year:

Mrs. L. D. Thalheimer, President
Miss May Symond, Vice-President
Mrs. Dorice Trigg, Secretary
Mrs. A. J. Maxham, Treasurer

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday afternoon of the month in the homes. Year books have been completed containing the members names and addresses, officers, by-laws, date and place of each meeting and the program and speakers for each meeting. This group now has a membership of 31.

A Navy Hospital project is well under way, and the club has honored Mr. Harvey Cox, a veteran of World War #1, with a life membership.

"In answering the advertisements in this magazine please mention that you saw the ad in the African Violet Magazine."

When writing to the members of the magazine staff please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your reply.

FISCHER'S NEW FANCY DOUBLE HYBRIDS!

Growers and Hybridizers of African Violets

MORE THAN 50,000 SOLD ANNUALLY!

Fischer's Double Margaret — $2.00
The very best of the dark blue doubles
Foliage has a decided rippled leaf.

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Dark lavender blooms, assuming a two-tone effect as they open.

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Beautiful pale shades of lavender. A delightfully pleasing color effect.

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Clear light blue shades. A beautiful contrast with the darker shades.

If you purchase one each of the above collection, we will send you FREE one unnamed Double Seedling, color characteristics undetermined.

Send for our New Fall price-list which will include our popular "MY LADY SERIES" and many others.

We are shipping to all parts of the country. Plants arriving in excellent condition. Postage prepaid on orders of $5.00 or more, otherwise add 10¢ per plant. No C.O.D. orders accepted.

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African Violets

Lovely new DuPont Hybrids now available, immediate shipment.

DuPont Silver Pink, DuPont No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in the blue shades. No. 1 the darkest, deep rich blue in group No. 5 the lightest pale blue in this color group. $2.50 each. Complete collection of 6, $12.00. New Double Orchid $1.75 each.

Amazon White, Blush Supreme Double Margaret, Red Spoon, Plum Satin and Burgandy $1.50 each.

Blue Eyes, Ruffles, White Waterlily, Amazon Pink, Jessie, and Dupont Lavender Pink $1.25 each.

Freida, Red Head, Bi-Color, Amethyst, Purple Prince, Kewensis and Du-Pont Blue $1.00 each.

Admiral, White Lady, Pink Beauty, Blue Girl, Ionantha 75¢ each.

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Neutritive elements in Proliferol are sufficient to feed plants during difficult growth periods. May be used in place of regular water, as often as watering is necessary. Bottle of 8 Capsules . . . $1.00 (each capsule makes 1 Gal. solution.)

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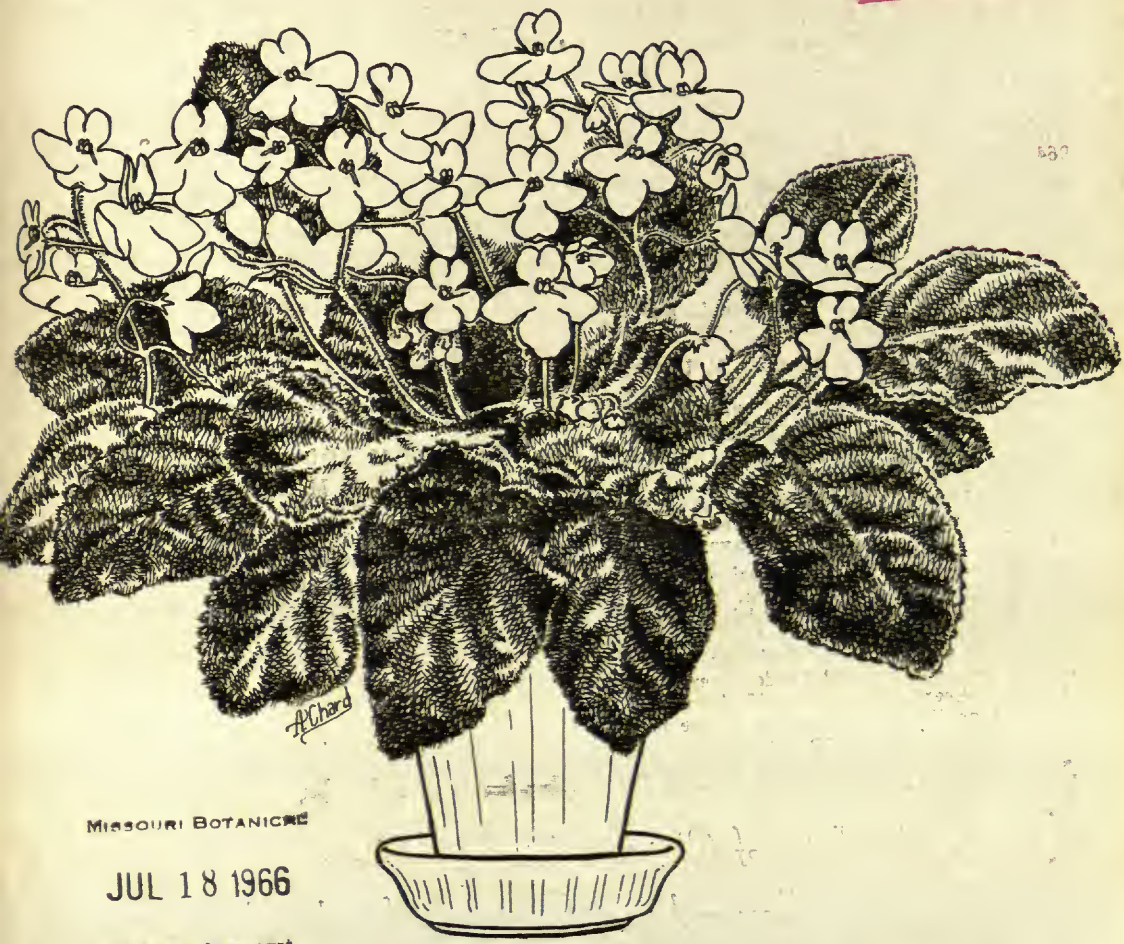

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THE AFRICAN VIOLET MAGAZINE

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Members:

It is astonishing how may times I can read the proof of this magazine, and not discover all the errors. But when it is printed, and it is too late to make corrections, how easily and how quickly each mistake can be found!

A year ago it was reported to you that 1949 gave promise of being a most successful Saintpaulia year. We have made great strides and 1949 having kept its promise we may close the books on a bountiful year.

Looking forward, it is our belief that 1950 will be one of the most interesting African violet collectors have ever known. There is much in the future . . . Many of the best are yet to come.

The special Christmas Surprise . . . a beautiful color print of Arthur Chard's drawing of the Norseman was secured thru the courtesy of Mr. A. W. Lehman. To him we say, "Many thanks for your interest and assistance in making this possible."

Our best wishes for a merry, old fashioned, fun-filled Christmas and a Happy New Year . . . to all of you, from all of us.

Most sincerely,

Alma Wright

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Box 901
Alexandria, Virginia.

May the Spirit of Christmas bring you Peace,
Good Cheer and much Happiness for the New Year
Alma Wright *Mary Parker*

The Presidents Message

Christmas and the New Year

This issue of the Magazine will reach you, and all of you, just a short time before the Christmas festivities commence, and only a few days thereafter we enter the New Year with all of its promises.

It is a happy and joyous time, then, for me to say farewell as your President. The year 1949 has truly been my year, because I have immensely enjoyed this year's opportunities for service in promoting the best interests and the progressive growth of our Society. To me, 1949 has been a great year during which I was enabled personally to meet so many of our members. Certainly I will especially treasure every day of this year in the future, because of its many pleasant associations.

Next year . . . 1950 . . . already promises to be a really greater year for all of us. We will enter it and continue progressively through it under the splendid leadership and guidance of our new President . . . here she is in the lower left hand corner of this page to greet you! . . . Mrs. Arthur (Myrtle) Radtke. I know of no more capable hands nor sweeter spirit in all of African Violetdom than those possessed by Myrtle Radtke. So, it is a rare privilege for me to thus present her to you.

Myrtle, I pledge you my very best service during your year as President . . . 1950 . . . and the other officers, committee members and individual members of the Society join me right heartily in this pledge of helpfulness to you in the year ahead.

Faithfully,

Your President,

Anna Wright

ADDED INTEREST THRU ARRANGEMENTS FOR VIOLETS

Exhibited by Mrs. W. E. Evans.

At your next show plan more arrangement classes. Attractive arrangements will add a great deal of interest . . . Show off one or two of your favorite saintpaulias in an artistic fashion.

While African violets are almost the most difficult flowers with which to make an arrangement that will justify or enhance their beauty, they do lend themselves to a variety of ideas and settings. Just a little imagination and ingenuity will work wonders, and add glamour to this our favorite house plant.

Last Spring at the Memphis and Shelby County African Violet Society Show, a number of unusual exhibits brought exclamations of pleasure from the visiting public.

Three of the Blue Ribbon Winners are pictured.

Exhibited by Mrs. W. P. Fraser.

Exhibited by Mrs. Horace N. Smith.

FOR VIOLETS---A DREAM KITCHEN

Elizabeth de Sylva

When she planned her kitchen, it was much more important for Mrs. C. B. Ostrander of Rochester, N. Y., to have a place for her African violets than to have a place to eat, to wash dishes or to cook.

Of course she has all those, too, but when the dream kitchen first began to take shape in her mind, it was of her violets that she thought. And so, she designed the kitchen herself.

Needless to say, Mrs. Ostrander's hobby is African violets. So, when she planned the kitchen, she planned windows on three sides which would be their home. And, because the sun does get around to all three sides of the house at various times, she added Venetian blinds that would keep the light right.

The kitchen once ended where the sink now stands but by adding the new part, the back shelf of the sink (the latest model in sinks, by the way) became a serving table. She has a special shelf with a built-in compartment for cook-books which, if a saintpaulia fancier were less skilled than Mrs. Ostrander, might be used for garden books or files on hobby plants.

The color scheme is heaven blue and canary yellow and seems exactly right as a setting for the plants which blossom in pastel shades which blend. The floor is blue, the ceiling yellow and narrow striped ruffling combines the two colors.

Just outside the window you will see the repeated blue of more than 100 delphiniums. Mrs. Ostrander calls these her "first love," for she's an ardent dirt gardener, too.

But in Rochester she's one of the top specialists in growing the nation's favorite —that little plant from Africa!

a MORNING CHAT

with Mrs. Claude Russell

Good Morning. Come on out to the kitchen . . . this is my African violet workshop. You can watch while I work with a few ailing plants.

I have just diagnosed this case of "Blue Eyes." She has the common pest disease known as "mealy-bug." How do I know what's the trouble? Well, the leaves seem to curl downward and upward with a woolly look to the top side of the leaves. Flowers may not open, and they aren't normal if they do. What to do to eliminate this trouble, you ask? I'll use a toothpick cotton-wrapped dipped in alcohol to remove and destroy the bugs. I sometimes use clear nail polish on these pests when I first discover a few.

To control mealy-bugs, mites, and thrip use a good spray, using one teaspoon of Volck and one-fourth teaspoon of Blackleaf "40" to one quart tepid water. It's important to spray directly down into crown of plant. Use on plants and root cuttings at ten day intervals. Liquid nicotine (one part to 200 parts of water or one teaspoon to one quart water) used as a spray will control pests including mites. Plants should be sprayed every two weeks regardless of size. When a violet plant becomes hopelessly infested with mealy-bug or mites, it's better to destroy the plant altogether and secure a healthy plant.

Do you see that plant over on that shelf? It was suffering from crownrot and leaf decay, caused by overwatering during the rainy weather . . . so we can't emphasize too much that overwatering is very injurious to our plants. Never let water get into the crown as this causes crownrot.

I took this plant up out of soil and put it into a dish of rain water with one pinch of Hyponex using sticks to elevate plant so leaves don't touch the water. A short time elapsed until new roots began to form. After a good root system had developed I put this plant into a pot of Vermiculite and sand. When plant began to put on new leaf growth I repotted into a well balanced dirt mixture. Mix soil thoroughly before using. Put plenty of crushed cinders in bottom of pot for good drainage. As to repotting, you don't have to worry, they can remain in the same soil two or three years. African Violets are heavy feeders, so use a good alternating food. Be sure not to feed your plants when soil is too dry as it will burn the roots. Here is a good plant food to try as an alternating feeding. The following is good to force plants into bloom and help keep them healthy too.

First week—Water with one teaspoon ammonia sulphate in one quart warm rain water.

Second week—One teaspoon Super-Phosphate in one quart warm rain water.

Third week—1-4 teaspoon Hyponex Plant Food in one quart warm rainwater.

After a couple of weeks feed again. Rainwater is best for all kinds of house plants. Our water has chlorine which is very injurious to house plants.

No, that is no special decoration around the pot. I cut a ring of "Reynolds Wrap Pure Aluminum" to fit the top of my clay pots, and mashed it down both inside and outside of pot to protect the violet leaves from wetting off. Clay pots drink up water and hold moisture, when the leaves come in contact with the pot, they dampen off. This certainly has been a life saver for my leaves that touch the pot.

You are wondering which is the best exposure for your plants? One must experiment with plants and adapt them to their own environment. For instance, one person may find their violets bloom better in a western exposure, while another has proved an eastern exposure is more beneficial.

I have grown in all four exposures, but get better results in northern and eastern exposures, using a glass window curtain to keep out the direct sun rays.

Oh yes, I'm giving my violets their Saturday bath to remove accumulated soot and dirt. During hot weather a weekly shower on their leaves is as refreshing to them as a daily bath is to us. It keeps them clean and gives more humidity for the plants. However, the plants must be kept out of the sun until the leaves are dry to prevent spotting or burning holes in the leaves, as water acts as a lens, and surely will disfigure them.

No indeed, don't ever put your plants where they will be in a direct draft, but always give them plenty of fresh air. They distinctly detest stale air so keep your room well ventilated.

Some growers increase humidity about their plants by placing the pots on a layer of moist sand or gravel in a shallow pan. With this method the porous pots also absorb some moisture, thus eliminating frequent watering.

So Mrs. Jones wants to know what to do about the Red Spider? I've never had that pest, thank goodness! But some good authorities have told me they have controlled Red Spider by dusting with sulphur, but be sure the temperature is below eighty degrees, as otherwise it will burn the leaves. High humidity discourages these pests. Of course, we all know to prevent disease, space the plants several inches apart. Don't handle a healthy plant directly after handling one infected with insects or disease. Sterilize hands first, using a good strong soap.

You say there's a little white fungus growth on top of some of your violet soil? This is "mildew." It may be controlled by spraying the top of the soil lightly with fine sulphur dust.

Mrs. Howell is complaining that none of her violet buds are opening, they form well, but drop off. I asked her if she was using gas to cook with or had a gas furnace. After she told me she cooked with commercial gas, I knew that was her trouble. If a great amount of gas is in the air, foliage will be affected, leaves will curl and become an unhealthy green, and buds will drop off. After the gas company checks for leaks, another test for detecting gas is by using a fresh carnation. If gas is present, the flower will curl up and go to sleep. Dry and low humidity is another cause of bud drop.

From all I've been saying, you would think raising African Violets would be quite an expensive hobby. There are a number of ways to obtain many different plants other than buying. For instance, you and your fellow growers can exchange leaves and start new plants. Because sooner or later you'll realize that you can't have too many Saintpaulias. Yes, propagation is one of the most fascinating things about this intriguing plant. It may be propagated by three or four methods. There's vegetative reproduction, seed formation, division of plants and plantlets reproduced on flower stalks. Let's discuss them one by one.

Vegetative reproduction is the most common method. It is accomplished by the detachment of a leaf from plant body. Any length stem may be used successfully. Select a nice crisp leaf. It may be rooted in soil, sand, vermiculite or water. Even a leaf with no stem can be successfully rooted. Always leave your leaf for an hour to heal before rooting progress is started as this seems to prevent rot. The stem should not be deeper than half an inch in any growing medium, one-fourth inch is better in most cases. Length of time required to root leaves varies. When water method is used, put leaves in bottle of rainwater or sterilized water, put one-eighth teaspoon of Hyponex and a bit of charcoal in each bottle. Another way is to put a few grains of wheat in the bottle of water. The sugar in the wheat helps prevent leaves from rotting when first starting to root. I find leaves root quicker in blue or colored bottles. Kept out of direct sunlight, they will root in two or three weeks time. A glass dish or aquarium with glass lid is also good to root leaves in, using one part vermiculite, one part sand, one part peatmoss. Moisten with water to which plant food has been added.

Put leaves in slanting. Cover and they develop good root system in from four to eight weeks. Now when you transplant to soil, note that considerable vermiculite mixture adheres to hair-roots. This reduces shock when transplanted. Soon tiny mouse ear leaves will appear. Care should be taken to see tiny plants are not planted too deeply into soil as crown should be free of soil. When translanting tiny plants and there are more than one to a leaf, cut plants from leaf, set one plant to each pot. The leaf may be put back into whatever mixture is being used, to grow more plants.

Say, have you tried your luck growing plants from seed? Did you know the seeds are as fine as dust, and must be handled very carefully? Plant on top of surface of a good fine medium, equal parts of sifted sand and peatmoss. After sowing seeds on surface of soil, very gently press down with flat object. Water with fine spray or better still, set the box or dish in water and let the soil take up as much water or moisture as it needs. Let the excess water drain off before placing the container in its proper position, and cover with glass lid to insure the right humidity. Water from bottom when needed. Put in a warm light place and keep covered with glass lid, only take off to wipe moisture when it forms. Takes six to nine months to get nice plants. When plants are larger transplant to soil mixture.

Every seedling will mean a big thrill of anticipation while waiting for buds and blossoms. One never knows just what to expect from violet seeds.

We all want specimen plants, but you'll have to watch when double crowns form. Divide and plant only one crown to the pot. A single crown plant is much prettier. Daily turning of pot will keep them symmetrical.

I'm sorry you have to leave now—I hope your visit to my African violet workshop has been beneficial, and that we may visit again sometime in the near future.

THE AFRICAN VIOLET HOTEL

by Mable Boyd

An African Violet bug stung me several years ago and caused me to run a very high fever. Finding no cure for the infection contracted from this violent bug, my temperature continued to rise, and I succumbed to the results.

I enjoyed propagation and had excellent luck, but alas, my poor husband and boys -- two young huskies -- found, not only the window sill filled, but themselves literally crowded out, for violets were sitting on every table in the house.

With such an acute violet parking problem, I set to work to devise some means to keep my family happy, -- for they dearly loved "Mama's Wild African Violets", -- and to take care of my plants.

Knowing that cities helped solve their parking problems by erecting automobile hotels several stories high, I designed my African Violet Hotel.

We rushed to finish it and have the plants in place when Mrs. John E. Hooper and Mrs. W. C. Hope of Memphis, Tenn. came to Humboldt as my guests to help set up a society here last fall.

All who have seen it are so delighted that we decided to pass it on to the magazine for the benefit of all people who are living under crowded violet conditions.

The African Violet Hotel easily accommodates from fifty to seventy-five plants and more shelves may be added across the ends to increase seating capacity. Propagation pans may be placed underneath. I use glass baking dishes filled with sand.

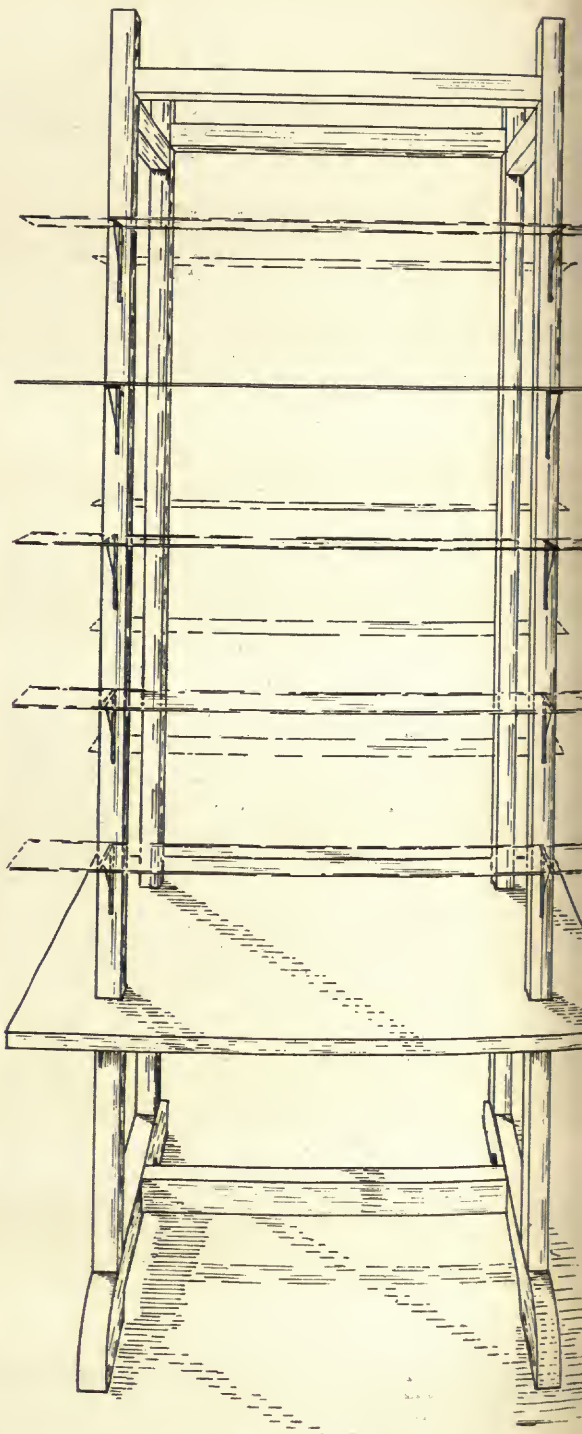
All four sides of the hotel may face the sun from day to day as it revolves easily on ball bearing casters.

At present I am growing Philodendron to use, as I think it mixes beautifully with violets.

The entire family has enjoyed the relief given them and the violets have grown beautifully in a home of their own.

Friend husband produced a bright idea for watering so many plants. Drove a nail in the top of one post and hung a fountain syringe. The hose is easily moved from plant to plant and the little clip may be used to cut off water when each little saucer is filled.

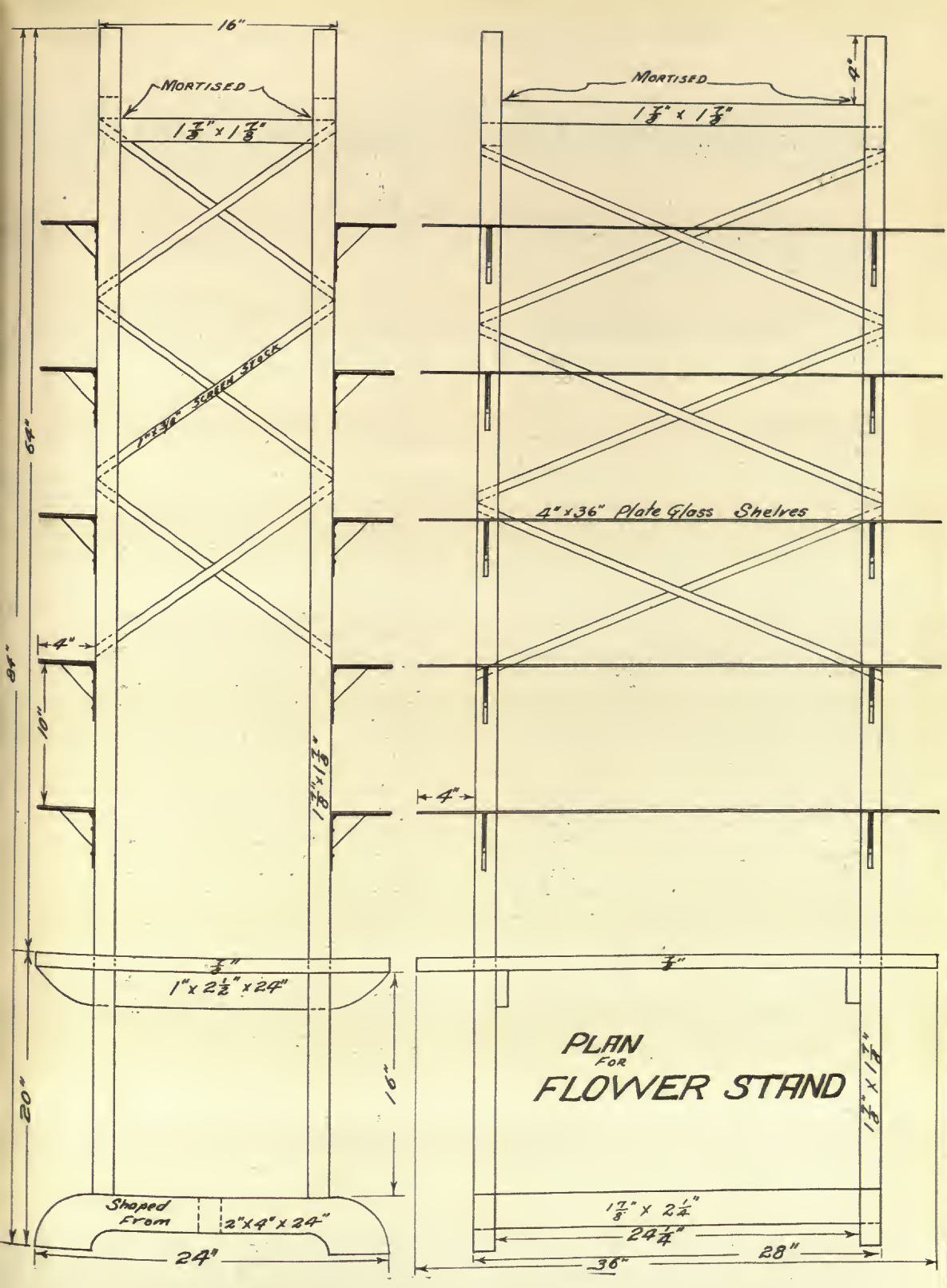
Works wonders! Saves time! Try it!



FLOWER STAND

Perspective

without Lattice-work


16"
MORTISED
1 7/8" x 1 7/8"
7"x1 3/4" Screen Stock
64"
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1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
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4"
1 7/8" x 1 7/8"
4" x 36" Plate Glass Shelves
4"
3/4"
PLAN FOR FLOWER STAND
1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
1 7/8" x 2 1/4"
24 1/4"
36"
28"

FORCING PLANTS INTO BLOOM

Harriet F. Lawton

(The following interviews were obtained by Harriet F. Lawton at the request of the Editor.)

There have been so many requests for information on forcing plants into bloom, the Magazine found it necessary to run an article to "Cover" the subject as far as is possible. "Covering" the subject is scarcely an adequate term, for upon looking into the matter, I find there is a great diversity of opinion among those who have really familiarized themselves with the requirements of the saintpaulia. It has seemed to be the general opinion of African violet hobbyists that these plants can be forced for blooming by a certain date, and they wish to know the magic by which this can be brought about. We all seem to be aiming at the same goal —African Violet Success—but the means of arriving at that goal can vary a great deal.

I believe in glancing over the following letters, you will be as surprised as I was to find so little true "Forcing" done by the people who are in a position to know how. A group of people were approached by mail and I think you will be interested in what they have to say. In glancing over these letters, you will find certain basic facts which you yourself have followed. Again, you will find views expressed which may be in direct contradiction of all someone else has told you. I have one or two such things in mind pertaining to myself.

I gathered from these several letters, that in the main, it is healthy plants we should aim for and that we should not weaken them by a forced blooming. It is quite marked that almost to a "man," those approached feel the same on this point. And, it is worthy of note that even the persons in commercial flower growing do not recommend forcing. They may differ on some other points, but upon this they all seem to agree.

The persons approached for information on "Forcing Plants into Bloom," have been most generous in giving their ideas. As so little forcing is done, and as the two are so closely allied, I am quoting as well the care given plants during the growing period leading up to the mature plant. I hope it will clarify the forcing idea so many of us have had, and that some will derive some new ideas on the early growth of plants. These letters follow:

Mrs. R. R. Blackburn
North Carolina.

"You ask how I force my plants into bloom? I am afraid I do not. Such success as I have I believe is due to the fact that I am forced to keep them somewhat rootbound as I just do not have enough room to put them in large pots. In fact, I will say that the ones in smaller pots bloom better for me. Last Spring I started using liquid cow manure, and I think I can say I like it better than any other form of plant food. The commercial fertilizer forms a crust around the edge of the pot."

Mrs. Brown of R. A. Brown and Sons Company, Georgia.

"I'm sorry I cannot give you any helpful information about forcing plants into bloom. We do not force ours; we try to feed regularly, and spray regularly, and we feel that they are better in the long run if they are not forced in heavy feeding or any unnatural treatment."

Good & Reese, Inc.
Ohio.

"We do not force violets in the sense that other plants are forced for specific dates.

If we desire to 'crop' the flowers for a specific date, we disbud the plants five to seven weeks prior to this date. The variation in time is due to seasonal variations. For instance, in March and April when the plants are in vigorous growth, five weeks is sufficient, but in winter months with shortened days, seven to eight weeks may be correct.

We never vary the temperature in our houses, carrying a constant 65 degrees. For this reason we do not force violets as is customary with other crops. For instance, in growing an Easter crop of lilies, the temperature may be increased to 85 degrees. This is never done with violets.

We use a small quantity of a complete fertilizer in our potting mixture soil. We then feed with a complete liquid fertilizer whenever we feel it necessary. There is no definite period for this but merely the application when we feel the plants will respond. We never use dry fertilizers as a top feed for fear of burning."

Mrs. C. H. Harris,
California.

"My idea of forcing African violets and not exhausting the plants is to give them a good rich soil with about half humus, good drainage, not over potting, systematic watering being sure to never over water, maximum light from eight to ten hours a day, and the thing that is so very hard for so many people to have, quantities of humidty. Violets will grow in very arid places but will not bloom, so this last item is in my estimation, the most important of all."

Mrs. C. L. Larson,
Michigan.

"I do not force my plants into bloom because I believe they do not need it. If you have good soil and water them with Hyponex, also give them regular care beside fresh air, this should be enough. If you force them you may have plants not nicely shaped. I use nothing but the clay pot although I have quite a nice collection of glazed pots in the attic."

Mrs. W. W. LaMar,
Maryland.

"My opinion on forcing small plants to bloom is, give them an abundance of light, in summer preferably a North light and other seasons an East, and keep the plants in tiny pots, (2" size) until buds are showing. After that plants can be shifted to next size pot and plant will continue to bloom.

I feel that light plays a more important part in the growing of African violets than any other one factor."

Mrs. George F. Pendleton
Missouri.

"I feel there is no one thing by which an African violet can be forced into bloom, but if I were asked to give the most important factor, I would say 'good strong light.' However, no plant in poor condition can be expected to do its best so I feel in order to get prolific bloom it must be well grown. To me, there-in lies the secret if there is one.

Soil is very important. My soil mixture runs something like this:

1 part garden loam
1 part leaf mold or rich compost
1 part well rotted manure
1 part peatmoss
⅓ part sand
1 teaspoon bone meal to a 3" pot

A plant under or over watered cannot be considered well grown so one must have a fair knowledge of how often and how much to water. It is not too important whether you water from below or on top but I prefer bottom watering; just enough warm water in the saucer until it shows dampness on the surface and not again until the top soil is completely dry.

A good fertilizer once a month helps. It encourages bloom; also adds size and richness of color.

Circulation of air is always important. I prefer a rather cool room about 65 degrees rather than a warm room, and as I have previously stated, light and more light is essential for profuse blooming. That does not mean sun light except the early morning sun before it becomes warm enough to burn the leaves, then a thickness of lace curtain must be drawn between the glass window and the violets. Sometimes two thicknesses of curtain are necessary but never draw the window shade and shut out all of the light.

I raise my violets on tables close to the windows, (two East, two South and one West). On long benches behind these tables I raise the younger plants that are getting ready to bud. All last winter I kept my window sills full of the plants I took from these benches and in no time they would be blooming long before the others. They had the benefit of all the light possible and when the sun reached the window I folded a sheet of white tissue paper lengthwise and placed it between them and the window until the sun was gone. These plants not only bloomed profusely but were extremely sturdy and compact, having the most luxuriant foliage of any I had."

J. A. Peterson & Sons
Ohio.

"We start our violets in vermiculite giving them approximately two months to root and send up small shoots. We then pot them into 2" or 3" pots and set them, pot to pot, on sand with bottom watering in a fairly dark house. (about 400 to 600 foot candles.)

We believe the general troubles in using straight vermiculite come from people watering too much and if you have a watertight container, you are faced with another problem, since the excess will have no chance to run off.

After the plants have made some quick, soft growth, we generally space them out on cinder benches. This is to give them more air to dry out to harden them for flowering. The light should be from 600 to 800 foot or possibly 1000 foot candles on a bright day.

On the cinder benches we are using top watering in some cases; bottom watering in others, trying always to use warm water. We have found that single crown plants will bloom before multi-crown plants. (Some varieties respond to this to a greater extent than others.)

Also, we have found different varieties require different amounts of light, but it is always true, the more light, the more flowers, even to the extent of some damage to the foliage. Violets are low feeders. They want some fertilizer, but not too frequent or too heavy doses. We fertilize using 3 pounds of a 15-30-15 mixture per 100 gallons (2 oz. per 5 gals.) once every 3 months. We suggest that plants with good foliage growth may be brought into bloom quicker by with-holding fertilizer, keeping them on the dry side and by giving them more light.

At present we are using the same potting mixture for the first potting as we do for subsequent potting. It is my opinion that a lighter mixture would be better for the first potting.

As a general practice we pot from a propagating bench directly into 3" pots and quite a few customers have said that our plants ship better and make sturdier plants because of the heavier soil.

A little more information on the subject of light. In recent checks we have found we are down to about 200 foot candles on some of the newly potted plants and find we are getting very good growth. This is probably due to the fact that we are getting this amount of light over twice as long a period as the 400 to 600 foot high during the winter months of the year."

Mrs. R. J. Schadewald
Pennsylvania

"When the heat is turned off in the Spring, my plants usually start their rest period. Those that are left blooming are placed in a northern exposure, as this exposure tends to intensify the color of the blooms. The remainder of my plants are transplanted at this time. They are never transplanted during a flowering period. I do not water my plants so often during their rest period, as the Spring Season when house temperature changes seems to be a ripe period for crown rot. I use common clay flower pots and water only when the soil is quite dry; about every six days. I put only enough water in the saucer that can be drawn up in one hour. I water occasionally from the top so that the useful elements will be drawn down through the soil again, from the soil surface.

About the last week in August when new plant growth seems to be active, I start feeding my plants Hyponex every ten days. Although plant food containing the most Phosphate Acid promotes blooms, one should be careful not to overfeed. When I fed my plants a 13-26-13 Plant Food, I discovered that my blooms were much smaller due to an overfeeding. I immediately went back to using Hyponex. A pinch of super phosphate may be placed in the plant saucer or added to the soil mix to promote bloom."

Two teaspoons of powdered alum added to one gallon of rain water may be given to intensify color of leaves and flowers. Rainwater is especially good because it is soft water and the minerals of hard water are not present.

Plant Chem has been used successfully by members of our African Violet Society of Delaware County to promote plant growth and blooms. Most of us fed our plants either Hyponex or Plant Chem weekly starting two months before our Spring Violet Show, and we all had an abundance of blooms for the show.

I have had equal success with blooms in all exposures although it is necessary to protect the plants from strong sunlight by drawing the blinds in Western and Southern exposures during the summer months. They need light but not much sun.

Mrs. Frank Tinari
Pennsylvania

"We still feel Hyponex is tops. If we can feed thousands and thousands of plants 'overhead' with Hyponex, without injury to plants, then surely the home grower can do it in their top or bottom watering without injury, used according to directions on box. We are very, very careful in whatever we use to follow directions.

In conjunction with Hyponex we are using also this new Proliferol; it too is proving itself excellent. We like to keep up on the really new things so are passing this on to you for what it may be worth. Too, we still stick to Hyponex, it's an old friend we can't turn back on; it is wonderful. We change off one to the other here in feeding."

Mrs. W. Duff Wilson
West Va.

"First of all, I don't ever force my violets to bloom. I take a very good leaf from a plant and root it in water. In about 4 weeks I plant the leaf in ½ Michigan Peat, and ½ Vermiculite. Usually I keep the leaf covered for a few weeks with an air space. When these are about two months old I separate the little plants into 2" pots. I use a mixture of one-third soil, one-third peat, one-sixth sand and one-sixth manure. As soon as I transplant them, I water with a warm solution of Hyponex water. Usually I use one-fourth teaspoon Hyponex to two quarts of good hot water and let the newly potted plants absorb this. I water with this same solution once a week for three weeks after they are transplanted. These plants should not be set in the strong light for about 3 days. Then you can put them in a place where it is light and warm. These little violets should never stand in cold water and should never be bone dry. Both affect the white feeding roots which are developing. After the roots have developed, then the blossoms begin to form. When they are about 5 months old. begin giving them a little Hyponex water (one-fourth teaspoon to 2 quarts water—good and warm) about every ten days. My little violets then begin blooming between 5½ and 6½ months.

To me, the secret of making violets bloom, is taking care of each step of their life. just at the time they need to be pushed another step forward.

I grew over a thousand violets last year in my apartment. After running my 17 experiments, I found it was best to separate the little ones from the leaf as soon as they were 1½" tall. This way, the larger plant can be rushed on to the blooming stage and the others will come along too, only that they need a little more time to develop, and have that chance when the larger plant is taken away. This allows the smaller plants more light and more air. Also, it gives them a chance to develop into symmetrical plants.

Violets should always be brought to bud stage in two inch or two and one-quarter inch pots, then transplant into three inch just as they begin to bloom."

Now that you are through glancing over the above quotations, I would like to add my two cents worth; it may be of help to someone! !

I have followed Mrs. Tinari's idea of the Hyponex and liked it a lot. Plants certainly picked up a lot under this and I have found that it is not so strong that one is apt to burn foliage and roots. (If used according to directions.) I have one other aid

to coaxing plants to bloom, and it has proved to be successful by many. That is the use of superphosphate in water. (1 teaspoon to 1 quart of warm water) Water with this once a week. Water from the top, being careful not to wet foliage. Superphosphate is an element that will go only where it is put. It will not travel both ways, (up through the soil as well as down) as will the nitrogenous elements. Therefore, water from the top as this will be carried down around the root system with the water. If watered from the saucer this element will not work its way up through the soil. It takes about 4 to 6 weekly feedings of this to make buds appear. Never try to coax anything but a healthy plant. When buds show color, then discontinue the use of superphosphate. I have an acquaintance who raises beautiful plants. She uses this method of forcing in the fall, but only after her plants have had a full 3 months rest period. When plants are rested they can tolerate a little more coaxing, but they cannot be constantly pushed. Greenhouse growers would probably caution you against the use of superphosphate for this purpose. Mrs. Schadewald has stated her views on this. There is danger of over doing it, but upon inquiry I have been advised that the dose as mentioned above is very mild, and can do no harm if used as directed. However, know when to stop. Enough is enough!! Also, a teaspoon of superphosphate and one of bone meal in each quart of potting soil is a builder upper.

I trust the above ideas from various sources have been of help to some of you. As none of these people believed in a definite forcing program and gave so generously of their ideas on the growth and health of the plant from the plantlet up, we have given you the whole thing as one could not well be separated from the other.

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GROWING AFRICAN VIOLETS IN BUBBLE BOWLS

Jeane Myers Hilliard

A window of bubble bowls will certainly become either a conversation center in your home, an object of beauty, or a miniature greenhouse or hospital.

Some years ago while glancing through a gardening magazine my eyes were suddenly drawn to a picture of a console table, upon which rested a Christmas decoration of a bubble bowl filled with an African Violet plant, a candle stick and a sprig of pine between the two objects. This made a very festive and attractive table. Immediately my mind set to work trying to find a space in my house for such an object. Since that time my library windows have been decorated, so to speak, with three 10" bubble bowls. The center one is Plum Satin flanked by Pink Beauty and Sailor Boy, although Sailor Boy is a bit leggy for this kind of planting. 'Tis a pleasing effect from my driveway and callers after saying "hello" usually ask, "How did you plant them?" and, "Do violets grow well planted in this manner?" You probably are thinking the same, so I shall attempt to give you my method of planting.

To keep the dirt from showing the bowl is first lined with bright green woods moss. In the bottom I sprinkle a few pieces of charcoal and some cinders. The second step is to place coarse, porous, rich dirt, about 2 to 2½ inches, leaving a hole for the plant. You are now ready to select a plant, preferably one which is medium sized and has a well established root system. Shake the dirt from the plant and place as near as possible in the center where the hole has been made. Take care to spread the roots in all directions if the opening in your bowl is large enough to let your hand through. Cup the leaves up gently so that the plant can drop through without damage to leaves and stems, as often the plants are brittle and the leaves will pop all around the outer edges. Now you are ready to finish covering the roots with the same rich soil as placed in the bottom of your bowl. Cover up to the edge of the first stems. If you wish, moss can be placed on top of the soil but usually the leaves cover up the dirt—this step is a matter of choice and does not hinder or help.

Photo by Ross Hahn

No doubt by now you have dirt all over the bowl, your arms and your work table. To cleanse the inside, I usually do two operations at once by watering around the edge from a watering pot. The outside can be cleaned with glass wax or some such polish. To cleanse the leaves a small florist spray can be used gingerly but firmly to dislodge any stubborn particles left.

It was from here on that I learned many helpful things about caring for and growing African Violets (and I've been growing them for over ten years). In bubble bowls African violets can be forgotten, unwatered and "unputtered with" for indefinite periods. They create their own moisture and therefore are especially desirable for hot, dry houses. They are protected during the winter from drafts and low temperature where there is a fluctuation of heat. In the spring they are protected by an extra layer of glass which wards off sunburn. Really it's the answer for those who have little time to spend caring for their plants and it's ideal for those who forget to water. (Most of us have the watering urge much too often.) Should I say it's a real lazy man's way of having blooming plants?

Plants grown in this way will bloom profusely and for a long period of time—however, they have to be fed more when they do begin to rest—but by this time you may be tired of this particular plant and want to change so as to get another color effect. Each time you change plants you will declare, "this color is the loveliest" —"but aren't all our violets lovely?"

To use as a hospital I fill the bubble bowl with peat moss and vermiculite. I've never had luck with sand mixed with anything, so I'm a vermiculite believer. Plants suffering from root rot especially are well and sprouting roots in no time. Leaves planted in these bowls give forth baby plants unbelievably fast. I feel bubble bowls are the answer to those of us who are not fortunate enough to have a greenhouse.

So I say again, growing African violets in bubble bowls can be a joy, most especially, I think, to the novice because it is easy; the plants require little attention and bloom generously over a long period of time.

YOUR HINT HUNTER

Phyllis Ferrall
Rt. 5, Box 551
Battle Creek, Mich.

Have you tried Syco-bowls yet? They are most attractive and my African violets grow beautifully in them.

Edith Mackey of San Gabriel, California advises us to use a bulb syringe to remove surplus water from the dishes or trays our plants are in. She also plants three different violets in a single 5 inch pot. For example: A Blue Girl, a Red Head Girl, and a Pink Girl. I have tried this and they are interesting to watch in the progress of their growth.

Rainwater is good for your plants. If you are in a section where purification chemicals are present in your drinking water, and you have trouble catching rainwater, distilled water may be used. It may be purchased at most filling stations. Your plants will love it.

A plant cape is very useful, says Mrs. Milton Eckhardt, Baltimore, Maryland, for retaining the soil while showering off your plant. To make one, cut a circle about the size of a dinner plate from an old raincoat or a piece of shower cloth, cut from outside to center. Place the cape under the leaves over the dirt holding it close to the pot. This leaves one hand free to work with. A dish sprayer is ideal to spray with.

Mrs. Eckhardt recommends commercial manures because they are sterilized and are more likely to be free from black flies and other pests. She also suggests when leaves are rooted in water that the container be kept in the shade.

Professor E. C. Wildon, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan says, "Leaves will root more quickly in water if black paper is placed around the container". He emphasizes too that sterilized soil should not be used immediately. It takes at least a week to bring germination back to its natural state.

Mrs. F. H. Fortney of Galion, Ohio uses her pressure cooker to sterilize her soil. It comes out moist and sterile after it has been cooked for 45 minutes at 15 pounds pressure.

"Discarded battery jars are fine for rooting leaves", says Maxine Wangberg. She uses 4 inches of rooting medium in the bottom. If leaves are limpy they will soon perk up if the jar is covered with a small square glass.

If you are interested and enjoy this column let me know and don't hesitate to send in your hints. Happy Hunting!

Editors Note:
When writing to Mrs. Ferrall, please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your reply.

WINDOW-WALLED GARDEN IN HODGES HOME

Frances DuBois

The Alvin Hodges have no need to envy Aladdin and his magical lamp, for they have wrought a little miracle of their own in their home in Terrace Park, Cincinnati, Ohio. They made summer distant from winter only the second's time it takes to step from their living room into the gay window-walled garden dining room that borders the South side of their house.

It had its start 10 years ago, when Mr. and Mrs. Hodges envisioned a little plant room in the angle between the kitchen wing and the main part of the house. With the help of an ordinary "hammer and saw" carpenter, their dream soon became a reality.

All along the windows that line the south and east sides of the room there are plants—plants on the sills, on the shelves, in brackets fastened to the frames, and on tables.

The trailing branches of wax plant outline the windows in graceful festoons, a rosy azalea brightens a corner, pendant runners of saxifrage drape over a glass shelf, the pink and green leaves of coleus mingle with the crimson foliage of bloodleaf, and scarlet and white sultanas add their old-fashioned charm. And everywhere are African violets, some 30-odd varieties; red-purple, blue-violet, lilac-pink, and lavender-blue, all the colors blending in beautiful harmony.

Even on the most dreary day this room holds brightness and cheer. The crisp gayety of woodwork and wrought iron furniture painted white, and canaries singing among the branches make you feel you are in the midst of a garden.

MY METHOD OF PRODUCING FULL BLOOMING SPECIMEN PLANTS OF AFRICAN VIOLETS

Anna Layson

When one African Violet grower meets another, they never ask who your grandmother was or what does your husband do, but how many violets do you have and about your varieties. So I have approximately two hundred plants in my home, but my husband always says a thousand! ! He feels like the violets are steadily encroaching upon us like our first settlers felt about the forests.

To stimulate good root growth in African Violets has held my interest. If a plant has a well developed root system, it will give good performance; but, lacking these roots, it is unable to take up the best plant food in the world.

The fine roots of the African Violet enjoy a loose root run. I like my basic potting soil mixture of loam and sand to be rich in organic matter, preferably coarse natural humus found in woods soil or a good compost soil all sifted and well mixed. It is the organic matter in the soil which nourishes the soil bacteria. These soil bacteria manufacture solvents which render the minerals available to the plant. Plants must drink their food; they cannot eat.

A good soil holds both water and air at the same time. Moisture and air are held in spaces between the soil particles. Where there is an excess of water, the air is driven out and the soil becomes water-logged and the plant suffers from lack of air. Lack of water, on the other hand, also upsets the balance between air and water. A plant will make more root growth when the soil is drying down. The roots reach out for water as the supply diminishes and root growth results. African Violet roots will quickly reach down to the bottom of the pot for moisture and air. To afford this condition, I cover the bottom of the pot with a little sterilized spaghnum moss, and on top of the moss put a scant tablespoon of ground limestone or chat that is used on our driveways or roads in this locality, tamp down and proceed with my soil mixture. I also take a strand or two of the spaghnum moss and twine around the roots. The spaghnum moss encourages the growth of the fine roots which soon penetrate into the new soil. This ground limestone in the bottom of the pot not only facilitates drainage and aeriation, but also keeps the soil from becoming stagnant.

I water in the morning from the top until about an inch of water appears in the bottom saucer which is usually absorbed by noon, and feed alternately once a month with liquid cow manure and liquid commercial fertilizer after plants are well established and budding or blooming, but withhold feeding through the shortest days of the winter months. I try to avoid a root-bound condition or my plants becoming too dry, as any slight neglect will jar African Violets into second growth or production of suckers. However, these young shoots may be rubbed off of the plant early in their development.

African Violets are sensitive to light and sun. Plenty of light produces continuous bloom but it should not be so strong that it will bleach the color in the foliage. A little sun is beneficial. A little shade from a thin curtain or tissue paper is usually sufficient protection. Good air circulation at all times, summer as well as winter, is needed. I maintain a minimum night temperature of 62° and daytime 68° to 70° degrees.

Since using ground limestone in the bottom of my pots, I have not had a case of sick violets from wilt. Previously, I had fine blooming plants to droop and wilt, when I felt sure they were not overwatered. I have used this potting method for over eight months without a single plant showing wilt.

It is interesting to hand-pollinate for seed, crossing varieties with the most desirable foliage. For the very small African Violet seed, I use a woods loam, sifted through a piece of window screen and baked at low temperature for thirty minutes. * I cover the bottom of a glass dish with an inch of this moist soil, scatter evenly the seeds and cover with a piece of glass. Keep from light in a warm place, give air every morning and replace the glass cover. Water very sparingly around the edges of the glass dish. After young plants begin to appear, afford more light but do not expose to sun. When these plants are two inches high, I transplant to three inches apart in same kind of soil in a larger glass dish or pan. I keep transplanted plants covered with glass until growth starts. When needed, I pot into two and one-half inch pots in regular potting soil and when showing buds, start feeding.

Vermiculite is my rooting medium for cut leaves. This is a sterile inert medium which is conducive to root growth. Since vermiculite contains practically no plant food, I pot the rooted leaf in soil as soon as young sprouts appear around the stem and divide the colony of young plants when large enough to handle easily. Vermiculite should never be kept too wet. My young plants remain in two and one-half inch pots until they bloom or when roots demand shifting. I prefer the three-quarter or azalea pots and underpot as to size.

(*There is some question as to whether baking for only 30 minutes at a low temperature will destroy nematodes — Editor)
(Through the courtesy of Mrs. Layson, this copy of her talk at the Convention was made available — Editor)

PLANTS DISPLAYED AT PARTY IN ANDERSON HOME

Spring's most luscious hues were reflected in tea decor for the open-house event staged by Mrs. Edwin Anderson, Lansing, Michigan.

Responding to the request of local and out-of-town friends and members of the Lansing branch of the National Farm and Garden Association, Mrs. Anderson invited 150 guests to view for themselves her multitude of African violet plants now in full bloom.

The hostess' fame as an African violet expert, which has taken her on many lecture tours in the past 10 years, was strengthened when early arrivals at the open-house glimpsed the large picture window in the Anderson home.

Displayed in a riot of color were Saintpaulias — nestled in gleaming copper containers — and set on a tiered table before this window.

The living room coffee table held a Double Duchess violet plant and the other tables were colorful with rainbow shaded violets in copper buckets.

Practically every room in the house was decked with violets to illustrate the love of the hostess for her favorite plant. Special built-out windows in the kitchen and glass shelves in the den were stocked with the violets.

In the dining room, the centerpiece was a huge Commodore violet in a dark purple shade. This was set in copperware to complement the copper candle holders in which deep pink tapers stood. A Quaker lace cloth covered the table and two wren figurines, in deep pink, added to the spring effect of the table. Violet blossoms had been scattered near the wrens.

Mrs. Ralph Toaz and Mrs. Samuel Young had charge of the tea table. Pouring during the afternoon were Mrs. A. S. Metzell, Mrs. H. E. Cope and Mrs. Harry A. Wilson.

Guests were welcomed at the door by Mrs. H. C. Cunningham and Mrs. A. J. Seyfried, assisted by Mrs. A. T. Wilson and Mrs. W. H. Beck.

Acting as hostesses around the rooms were Mrs. Sam Beck and Mrs. William C. Buchanan.

SELECTION

By Roswell H. Johnson

There are other factors involving the choice of plants for one's collection which may be of more importance than just personal preference.

There is the selection of parent plants for use in hybridizing. Here we may follow either one of two different systems, each fully justified and neither to be neglected. The first one is for intensification of the desired trait. For instance, if the goal is size, then we will cross pollinate between the largest plants we have. However we may not want to sacrifice some achievement in a second trait, so we may cross the largest we get having the second trait. Both parents should have the trait to a large degree. Do not assume that a given trait is carried by either the pollen or seed parent plant only. This is a widespread belief, but it does not work with other species, and there is no definite proof that it will in the African violet. If it is ever found to be true, it will be a rare trait carried outside of the genes. The genes carry nearly all traits.

The second system, and a most important one, is that of combination. We may have a variety that has excellent color and size but has some poor trait, possibly slow growth, then we will cross this variety with another with excellent growth habits that will enhance as little as possible the undesirable traits, that is, its color and size will be as little different from the first chosen plant as possible.

In combination crossing, be sure to cross some of the resulting seedlings together and also with each parent for a second generation, as the first generation may fail to give the desired combination. Grow a large number of the second generation seedlings, many more than the first generation.

Since many of the varieties you are using are themselves hybrids, you may hope for a fair variation in the seedlings of an ungraded pod or one where the label is lost. If that is all you have, plant them, until you get more nearly what you want.

Passing now to another kind of selection, deciding which of the numerous seedlings you will select to bring to maturity. Here are four rules:

1. Carry on with the first and strongest to show.
2. Watch anything that looks different.
3. Keep a few from the main crop.
4. Save a few of the last to germinate.

Let us now assume that your seedling has flowered, and you are ready to consider the possibility of introducing it. The first and prime consideration is whether it is different enough not only from its parents, but also from other varieties already introduced. Here is where showing it to others is wise and necessary. The second consideration is whether, even though sufficiently different, it has merit. In examining a plant as to merit be sure that it is a good "doer." If it has some unique quality that sets it apart, but is not a good "doer" hold it to use as a future parent and attempt to overcome its shortcomings.

The greatest danger of assuming novelty where there is none, is when the foliage or flower is compared with others at some different stage. The seedling should be compared not only as a newly opened flower, but also as a dropped corolla. Still more is this important with leaf traits. Leaves go through a great deal of change in their development. Early leaves are different from late ones, young ones from old ones. Make your comparison with this in mind; otherwise the seedling might have a type of leaf at the time of comparison that looked different, but later comparison would show it to be only a particular stage of growth. To appreciate this, note the difference in a du-Pont Lavender Pink leaf in early, middle, and late stages of foliage development.

The saintpaulia hybridizer may learn a valuable lesson and save much precious time if a careful study is made on what has been already worked out on other plant species by our floriculturists. The old saying, "History repeats itself" is appropriate. For many years in times past with many other plants, greater emphasis was placed first on color and size of bloom, just as the greater emphasis is placed on the color and size of saintpaulia blossoms today.

After the progress slows in these traits as it does eventually, more time will be given to the development of African violets with unique as well as attractive foliage, plants which are more highly disease resistant, plants which grow more rapidly, and plants whose blossoms have at last fragrance. And finally, developing a saintpaulia with a wider tolerance to surroundings so that they may be grown under many and varied conditions. Let us learn from others' experience, and start now to work on these later traits which ordinarily get attention only in the future.

VIOLET PINS AND EAR RINGS

Made from Sea Shells in colors well known to African violet lovers — and many others. Pins or ear rings Blue Boy, Amethyst, Red Head, White Lady, Pink Lady, Sky Blue, Bi-Color $1.00 per pair. Corsages $2.00, men's lapel pins 75¢, scatter pins $1.00 per pair postpaid and tax included.

LAURA E. GREEN
541 Denise Rd.
Rochester 12, N. Y.

SHOW PLANTS

Eunice Toms

"What are the qualities that constitute a Show Plant?" is the question asked by seven out of ten people who visit and view an African violet show. Usually the question is not put because of any desire for information. It is simply that six out of the seven disagree violently with the decision and awards of the judges and use this subtle way of showing their disapproval and/or superiority in the matter of judging. Some members of the club sponsoring the show will also disagree—usually rather noisily. They seem to overlook the important fact that the judges were employed, not to approve of the club's wishes in the matter, but to act impartially and to the best of their ability.

The Show Committee of a recent African Violet Show took a popularity poll from among its visitors by handing each a slip of paper containing the request "Name your favorite plant." The favorite turned out to be the plant that was awarded "Third Best Plant in the Show" by the judges. This was probably part coincidence. The plant was a very fine one; well grown, shapely, and blooming abundantly yet when some people were asked why they chose that particular plant their replies ran along this line, "It is so pretty," or, "I have never seen that variety before and would like to have one." This line of reasoning is correct when merely asked to name your favorite plant, but unfortunately it is also the line used by the critics when they do their own private judging of a show. Second greatest number of votes went to a plant of Pink Beauty that did not even rate a ribbon in the opinion of the judges. The plant did, however, merit and receive the notation on its card "Beautiful blooms." In other words the voting in this case was completely wrong as the votes were cast on the lovely flowers and not on the plant for it only had one side. Mentor Boy was awarded the distinction of being "Best in the Show" by the judges, yet it received only three votes out of hundreds! A lady, when asked why her opinion differed replied, "Oh, Mentor Boy! Everybody has it."

It might be well to mention here that Mentor Boy usually manages to come away with one of the three best awards, and rightly so. Why? Because it is definitely show material; of easy culture, prolific with its blooms and well behaved in that it does not sucker as readily as many other varieties. A well-grown plant of this variety is a joy to behold. White Lady on the other hand seldom rates a place among the top three. When it does get there you really have a fine plant. Of easy culture and abundant bloom it has bad growth habits. It is practically impossible to have a symmetrical mature plant of this variety for it tends to become straggly, and is perpetually making suckers that spoil the shape.

African violets are not judged from a viewpoint of personal preference, mere eye appeal, or abundant bloom which sometimes camouflages a badly shaped plant or damaged foliage. Neither does the rarity of a variety prejudice the judges in it favor. Show plants are not selected by a casual look-see, but are subjected to rigid and thorough scrutiny by weighing each against the other.

What then are the qualities that constitute a "Show Plant"? First, the plant itself, its shape (symmetry), condition and health. This naturally and automatically eliminates multiple crowns, for no Saintpaulia can be shapely nor can it grow in its natural position as one crown growing against the other has its leaves pushed out of place or intertwined.

A generally accepted scale of points used in judging is as follows:-

Leaf pattern (symmetry)	35 points
Condition (cultural leaf perfection)	25 points
Quantity of bloom (for variety)	20 points
Size of bloom (for variety)	10 points
Color of bloom	10 points
	100 points

Let us consider a plant's leaf pattern. A symmetrical rounded specimen has most of the points in its favor as it eliminates the stragglers and lopsided ones. A nicely rounded plant with neatly spaced leaves is the best foundation on which to build good showmanship, and is the proof of care and good breeding. (The size of a plant is generally not a point in consideration when judging African violets unless there are two plants that reach the same degree of perfection. In this latter case the plant most nearly mature size would carry the weight. On the other hand a small plant as near perfection as possible would have it all over another that was lacking in any of the necessary qualities even though the other would be two or three times as large).

In valuating a plant's condition the following questions must be answered favorably. Is the color of the foliage average for the variety when grown under good conditions, i.e., not bleached or yellowed? Are the petioles average for the variety and the age of the particular plant; or are they too long, showing evidence of too poor light; or, is the plant too close and bunchy, showing evidence of too strong light? Is the foliage clear and unmarred by sunburn, spray burn, chill or broken leaves? (One marred leaf can spoil the appearance of an entire plant.)

Health conditions of a plant are manifest in a number of ways. There is freedom from disease and insects or the after effects of these pests. Clean foliage is a necessity for the health of a plant and shows not necessarily loving care, but consideration

for the plant's wellbeing. Carelessness in raising Saintpaulias can be evidenced in the general condition of the plant in its shape and health. Plants that droop unnaturally (for the variety) show neglect in watering at one time or another. The leaf and petiole may, at the time of showing, be firm and turgid and still droop unnaturally simply because at some time the plant was allowed to become excessively dry, and when water was again applied the weight of the leaf was too much for it to be raised without help. The petiole then assumed a curved position. Had consideration and forethought been given in this case the leaves would have been raised until the stems became rigid enough to support them. (This could have been accomplished by placing the pot in a large container slightly deeper than the pot, and wide enough to rest the leaves, not the petioles, on the edge of the container. Or a deep newspaper "collar" could have been made and the plant placed inside with the leaves resting on the top of the "collar" until the desired position was again achieved.)

Wide gaps in the rows of leaves also show improper care. The too long petioles of the outer row may designate improper exposure when the plant was young in that the plant reached out for light. The closer overlapping layers of the center may designate that the plant has lately been given better lighting condition, or the reverse may be possible, and good light conditions may have lately been changed to too strong an exposure thereby causing the center of the plant not to develop properly. Too marked a contrast in the coloring of the rows of leaves will also show the effects of varying light intensities from one time to another.

Shape is a very important factor in judging. Is the plant symmetrical? This is the one bugaboo on which show visitors are misled. It stands to reason that a plant's best side will be exposed to the viewer, and from that one side the plant may appear perfect. However, the judges are at liberty to get closer to the plants to turn them, and see them from all sides. Plants that are never turned to the light are either too short on one side, or a side will have a tendency to grow upright. The plant may be too wide in one direction or an oval shape instead of a more rounded one.

Judging African violets practically necessitates a knowledge of the various varieties especially when considering the blooms of the plant. Are there the average number of blooms for the variety and age of the plant? Mentor Boy, if mature, would not be considered a show plant if it only bore three or four stalks of bloom, for this variety, as mentioned before, is prolific. On the other hand the duPonts would not be discarded because they carried but three stalks as they are not abundant bloomers, and this fact must be taken into consideration.

Then there is the size of the bloom. For example, there are two Mentor Boys, both are in full bloom. One has the usual flowers for the variety while those on the other are much smaller. The former has a point in its favor because of the size of its blossoms.

Shade of the color of bloom must be considered, and here you have a ticklish subject for saintpaulias are not consistent in this respect. There is a general accepted shade for each variety, and blooms that are too light or too dark subtract from the plant's total score.

"How can one raise show plants?" The following nine points of procedure will help:

1. Use good potting soil. One that is loose so the roots can penetrate easily, and rich enough so that the plant will have available a constant supply of food.

2. Adequate light but not too strong.

3. Proper humidity and a constant or frequent supply of fresh air.

4. Water when necessary. Do not allow to become waterlogged or excessively dry.

5. Avoid overcrowding as this hinders proper development of the plant.

6. Wash plants frequently under proper conditions to assure health, and make possible the plant's ability to breathe.

7. Fertilize growing plants, especially those that have not been repotted or shifted for a year or more.

8. Remove marred or broken foliage, faded blossoms and suckers. Separate multiples when young.

9. Turn plants to the light so that they will develop uniformly on all sides. Remove leaves to balance plants that are too one-sided.

It is the writer's personal opinion that a dozen well grown "show plants" are more desirable to have than a house full of "space filiers" even if there is no expectation of ever exhibiting them in a show. To form a better understanding and appreciation of the work involved in show judging, do take the above scale of points, and impartially valuate a few of your own plants. Then work to build up your lacking points. All our windows could be show places of perfection.

SODIUM SELENATE. For Control of mites on African Violets. In Capsules of ¼ gram each, convenient for Extra-Dilute Method of treatment. 12 capsules (enough for about 200 plants) for one dollar, post-paid.

Mrs. Neil C. Miller

Layton's Lake, Penns Grove. N. J.

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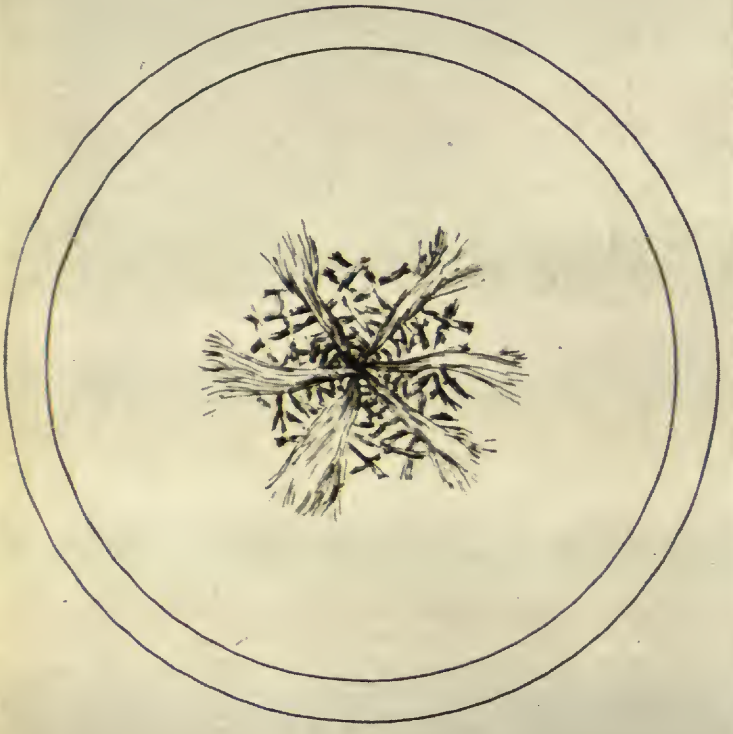

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GLASSWICK

Rosa Peters

A. Glasswick is several strands of glass yarn loosely twisted, and held in a woven cover of the same material.

B. Take one length of Glasswick and loop it around two fingers. Use another, longer length and tie around the center of the looped piece.

C. Rest the looped end on the bottom of the pot and push the longer length through the drainage hole.

D. Pull out the ends of the Glasswick very carefully. It should be spread evenly over the bottom of the pot until the drainage opening is covered.

E. The Glasswick should touch the bottom of the water container. For smaller pots use the small single strands of yarn. For the larger pot use Glasswick as it is. The amount used depends on the size of the plant and the pot it is to be grown in.

I imagine by now, many of you African Violet lovers have given Glasswick a trial, and hope all have had the satisfaction from using it that I have had. My first experience with Glasswick was about four years ago, using the No. 3 size in a twelve inch wooden seed flat. The seed to be planted were extremely tiny and very choice. I knew my success depended upon holding a steady moisture, as drying out at the time of germination would prove fatal. The result was quite satisfactory.

Last fall, I planted a packet of African Violet seed, using the brick method. It wasn't a total failure, as I raised one plant and it is different from any other variety in my collection. I had "plum" forgotten about the success I had using Glasswick four years prior, but decided to try planting African Violet Seed again, this time using Glasswick. I put a No. 2¼ inch wick in a six inch clay pot, filling pot two-thirds full of screened plaster gravel, the remaining one-third with a mixture using: 1 part plaster gravel, 1 part peat, and 1 part neutral celery soil, - finely screened, and the entire contents sterile. On May 26th, the seeds were planted, and on August 26th (three months later), there were 310 seedlings double rooted, some even measuring close to two inches, and still many younger tiny plantlets in the seed pot.

I cut up my remaining 2¼ inch Glasswick into four inch lengths and used them in four inch violet pots. Before long I noticed an improvement in my plants. So I placed an order for fifty feet of wick, with the Atlas Asbestos Company at North Wales and inserted the desired length into all my four inch pots.

Our home is very dry thru the winter with a 22% to 26% relative humidity, and we all know the effect of this on blossoms. But with my pots given the "new look", the humidity advanced to 45% and 50%. My Saintpaulias commenced to form buds and have supplied me with a riot of color ever since.

I bought the pint, wide mouth Ball jars to set my flower pots in; having so many to care for, it made it easier to watch the water line. One must learn not to overwater with wick. I never put more than ½ inch to ¾ inch water in the bottom of the jar. Every third day I check the containers, never adding more water until all has been absorbed and the plant feels a little on the dry side.

This method, Glasswick watering, is an added expense - but, with it increasing humidity, thereby producing more blooms, controlling Crown Rot, being a time saver, and allowing violet fans the enjoyment of short vacations — I consider the results most gratifying!

SAINTPAULIA SURGERY

Lorna Anderson

Don't be afraid to operate on African Violets. It isn't necessary to be a skilled surgeon.

If you have an old plant that has a long neck or stem, use a very sharp knife and cut it off even with the soil. If the cut-off is too long, cut off enough so there is about a one and a half inch stem left. Some of the lower leaves should also be pulled off.

Put powdered Transplant, as much as a dime will hold, in a bowl of warm water. Place the plant in this solution for about one half hour to combat shock and wilt.

The cut on the part which is still in the soil should be dusted with sulphur, using a small water paint brush. The sulphur will heal the cut. Set the pot away from the sunshine, and water as any other plant. Little leaves will soon grow on the healed scar and a lovely plant will develop.

Dust the stem of the top which has been cut off, after taking it out of the bowl containing Transplant, with rootone, and plant in soil with the crown even with the top of the soil. Keep it out of the sun for a few days. Water as before. This will take root quickly.

Don't hesitate to operate on a blooming plant, as it will continue to bloom with no setback. Some varieties take longer than others to start the new plant from the old roots, so be patient. Seldom do they die, and it is gratifying to have two plants from one.

CALUMNEA

(kal-lum'-nee-ah)

Louise F. Smouse

Our darling, the African violet, is only one small, dainty member of a very large, interesting and most attractive family named Gesneriacae, which you should find an interesting companion for your violets. In this issue we are introducing Calumnea.

This cousin of the African violet, from tropical America, is known to have two varieties, "gloriosa" which is the lovely plant in the picture at right, and "aurantiaca."

Gloriosa we have observed and grown and are more qualified to discuss.

Calumnea is considered an epiphyte—or "air plant" that scarcely roots but supports itself on other plants—without being parasitic. Therefore an excellent medium in which to grow them has proved to be fern roots, or light humus.

Their velvety foliage is brilliant, leaves about one inch in length and green with purple hairs giving a brownish appearance. They are red beneath which makes a rich setting for the scarlet flowers. Ruth Merry of Massachusetts has them in bloom in the photograph. She describes the blossoms as about three inches long, the lower part tubular, opening into a large upper and small lower lip. She tells us to water the plants sparingly and feed once a month.

Being tropical they need high humidity and for our pleasure must be confined to greenhouse or warm window culture.

A. A. Longmire of California tells us this species may be propagated by single eye cuttings, layering leaf petiole or by seed, following the same method as for Saintpaulia seedlings.

It is said that members of the different genera of Gesneriacae will cross freely, which is unlike most plant families. This would indicate an unlimited field for cross hybridizers.

Photograph — Thru the courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Percy A. Merry of Needham, Massachusetts.

VIOLETS ON WHEELS

"This stand for my African Violets has proven very practical," says Mrs. George Vallin. "Several violet fans here have had similar ones made and report favorably on their use. The mobility of the stand is one of its outstanding features. It can be wheeled to a new location any time, closer to the light, or farther away as the condition of the plants indicates.

We live in Beaumont, Texas. Most of the houses in this part of the country rely on gas heaters (natural gas) for heating, and as a result uniform heat over the house is not the custom at all times.

Our winters are not severe but night temperatures do drop below the comfort point for one's saintpaulias. It is an easy matter to roll the stand into a room where the temperature can be more or less controlled and the plants protected."

This display of African Violets won Mrs. George Vallin the sweepstakes award in the Spring Flowers on Parade Flower Show sponsored by Beaumont's seven Garden Clubs, held in the Lamar College Union building, on May 8 and 9, 1949. The same display also won Mrs. Vallin the tricolor Award of the Horticulture division.

A LATHE HOUSE FOR SUMMER

Clarissa Harris

(Regional Vice President for Region No. 10
—California, Oregon, Washington and
Nevada.)

It is Hello and Goodby as your Regional Director for District No. 10. When this issue of our fine magazine comes off the press, I will have served the society two years as Director, and having accepted the post of Second Vice President for 1950, will have to give up this most interesting work. Those telephone communications or a personal visit are regretfully relinquished, but I know someone else will have an opportunity to enjoy these privileges.

Now about African Violets. Upon returning from the Convention in Cincinnati the plants were all as healthy as could be, but no blooms, and the results that I have had in getting them to bloom may be of interest to others.

First they had to have a feeding and not too suddenly, so in checking my notes from the Convention decided to try Mr. Harvey's "1,2,3,4" method. For those who did not hear him, here is the formula . . . First Week, water with Vitamin B-1 solution; Second Week, plants are watered with Superphosphate; Third Week, water with Vitamin B-1 and the Fourth Week, a watering with Hyponex solution.

Having learned the hard way that high temperature during the day and low temperature at night would not produce a profusion of bloom or large blossoms, I looked for the location that would give a more even temperature. Plants growing in the house had never produced much bloom during the summer. Those in the greenhouse where the temperature regularly raised to 90 degrees and much higher ceased to bloom at all, and seemed to do just too much resting. When they did bloom the flowers were not up to their usual size, so plans were made to place a few plants under lath to watch results. After having doubled the lath so that the noon day sun was not permitted to enter, it was found that an additional covering several feet below the ceiling of light weight muslin was necessary to protect the foliage. Here it should be said that glass was placed on the windward side to an elevation of a foot above the plants placed on the top shelf, thus allowing a free circulation above the plants but protected from drafts. The floor and under benches were covered with sand to hold moisture. Here the temperature ranges from 60 to 75 degrees and never above 80 degrees, which the Research Department of California Technical Institute reported is the ideal temperature for maximum bloom. The results were such that gradually all the plants found their way to the Lath house for several months.

The season for rains ends around the first of June in our section, and there is little possibility there will even be a shower before September or October. Therefore, damage by cold rains is eliminated, and only when the night temperature falls to around 55 degrees will there be any thought of bringing the plants in, with the exception of a few in full bloom to keep the windows

from looking so bare. I admit I could not be happy without some around, but if they show signs of not doing their best, out they will go in exchange for others.

Occasionally the plants are sprayed but only when the sun is not too strong. The water is used from a tank in the glasshouse, which is adjacent. On days when the humidity is low a spray under the benches runs for several hours, but this moisture reaches the plants only by evaporation.

What are the results from this type of treatment? The plants have become much huskier, the foliage a rich green with dark veining and the petioles take on a touch of maroon and cease to reach for the sky. The flower stalks are sturdy and very healthy looking and produce many more flowers. The flowers do not lose any of their size, as do so many of the African violets in hot weather, and if anything, are larger and the color is very deep and rich especially with the red violets. Another most important factor is that the flowers are holding on from two to three times as long, therefore more blooms are in evidence at a time. Instead of the plants sending up one or two flower stalks there are as many as six to eight.

After this experiment the plants are going to the Lath House every summer. It is my belief that with this treatment the plants will bloom for longer periods, and would suggest that others try a similar method, especially if you wish lots of bloom during the summer months.

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VIOLETS FOR VETERANS

Neil C. Miller

"There's many a green thumb on a crippled hand."

The above quotation is from Harvey Cox, the real driving force behind the formation of the Veterans Project. "There's many a green thumb on a crippled hand" is more than a statement of fact. It is a challenge to the membership of the African Violet Society to seek out those crippled hands and place African violets in them, so that the owners can realize, perhaps for the first time, that they really do have green thumbs, and in the realization find something to break the monotony of hospital life, and to bring interest and cheer into an existence that might become drab and humdrum.

Harvey is himself a disabled veteran. He knows full well what an interest in growing saintpaulias can do for "those left behind" in veterans' hospitals. Almost from the date of organization of the African Violet Society he has urged the Society to do something about it.

About a year ago, Mrs. Freed recognized the importance of what Harvey had been urging, and the implied obligation to the Society not to ignore it. At about the same time, Mrs. Brown, of the firm of R. A. Brown and Sons, Newnan, Georgia, offered gifts of plants, in quantity, for such an undertaking. So Mrs. Freed proceeded to set up the present organization as an extension of the Homing Pigeon Department. When Mrs. Freed found it necessary to relinquish the homing pigeon work last summer, the Veterans' Project was set up as a separate department of the Society, headed by a Director reporting directly to the Editor.

The goal of the Project is to provide hospitalized veterans with African violet plants, and to guide them in plant culture and care until they have reached the point where they know how to grow the plants and no longer need instruction. It should be noted that the aim is to introduce African violets to the veterans, not merely to establish African violet clubs in the hospitals.

There are 129 veterans' hospitals in this country, with an aggregate of over 100,000 patients. Not all of these locations are suitable, for reasons that will be explained below, but the figures do indicate the magnitude of the job that can be done.

As all the work in the hospitals will actually be done by sponsoring groups, this article is for the most part a set of instructions for clubs or other groups who want to participate in the movement.

Of course, the practices to be followed have not been thoroughly developed as yet. But it is believed that use of the following procedures should produce effective results.

1. The first step is for an already-organized club or some other group of African violet enthusiasts to decide to investigate sponsorship of a hospital group. Ordinarily, the presence of a veterans' hospital within reasonable distance will be sufficient reason for a decision to investigate.

2. The next step is to write to the Director and inquire whether any work is already being done at that location. Most hospitals are large enough that several sponsoring groups can work in them, but each succeeding group should know of any preceding work.

The letter to the Director should give the name of the hospital being considered, the name of the sponsoring group (if it has a name), whether any informal contacts have already been made and other pertinent matters.

3. Upon receiving a go-ahead signal from the Director the sponsoring group should contact the hospital head and ask for an interview to discuss the matter with him. Generally the request should be by letter, but occasionally it can be by telephone or personal conversation. The hospital head may delegate the answering of the letter and granting of the interview to some other official, such as Special Services Officer, Recreation Director, Physical Medicine Renabilitation Director, or someone else, but the mere fact that the head has been contacted will give dignity to the request and will cause it to receive consideration that it might not receive if a lesser official were contacted first.

The request-for-interview letter should point out that the idea of starting an African violet culture group in the hospital is under consideration and that information and advice on the suitability of the location must be obtained from the hospital before actual decision can be made.

4. One person from the contacting group should be designated as the spokesman and should know in advance that she (or he) carries the responsibility of telling the hospital head or interviewing official just what is to be attempted, and how it is proposed to be done. This information, at least, should be given: That the goal is the introduction of African violets to the veterans for the recreational or therapeutic values they can get from them, that the plants and other necessary supplies will be provided free of all charge, that the sponsoring group will return at definite intervals to correct mistakes and to guide the veterans further in the culture of violets, that the best publications avail-

able will be given free of charge, that a co-ordinated effort is being made to set up similar groups in veterans' hospitals all over the country, and that the sponsoring group is acting as representative of the African Violet Society of America.

After the above information has been given, the question of the suitability of that particular hospital should be discussed. If the normal patient residence is less than three months, the location would ordinarily not be suitable, not enough could be taught in a shorter time to make the effort worthwhile. This will immediately eliminate most operative, postoperative, and classification establishments. It will also eliminate many Army hospitals; the patients there are soldiers and will soon return to duty. But the hospital officials may be able to suggest certain wards or groups even in these short term hospitals where the average length of patient residence is greater.

The best prospects lie in those hospitals or wards where the patients are more or less permanent, such as the tubercular, the psychiatric, the maimed, or even the blind.

5. If the location appears suitable, it may be desirable to proceed at once to find patients who would be interested. This will frequently be the case where sponsoring group is composed of a few individuals. When the sponsoring group is a club, it may be necessary to report the findings back to that organization for actual decision to go ahead.

Once the decision has been properly made to proceed, the next step is to find patients who would be interested. It will be necessary to rely rather heavily on the opinion of the hospital official as to how to do this. He may feel that posting a notice or making an announcement will be sufficient; he may call on persons in close contact with the patients, such as nurses or chaplains; he may suggest simply visiting a ward and talking with the men there, or he may know of an immediate nucleus of interest.

Frequently, it will be found that groups who regularly visit the hospitals, such as the Gray Ladies, the American Legion Auxiliary, World War II Mothers, and others, can give useful information in this regard.

The fact that enthusiasm may not be apparent should not be allowed to cause abandonment of the effort. Many of the men have been in hospitals for some time, and have seen many attempts "to do something for the boys" come and go, and they may be skeptical of this one, or they may feel that caring for a plant would be just too much bother, but the well-known ability of saintpaulias to grow upon you should not be forgotten. How many people who now have African violets on every window sill had the slightest idea of getting the second one when they got the first one?

6. As soon as possible a date should be set for the actual launching of the project, the delivery and distribution of the plants. The date can be set in advance if the plants are collected locally, but it will depend on time of arrival if the plants are shipped.

When the sponsoring group is a club, there will ordinarily be little difficulty in collecting enough plants from among the membership. But if the sponsoring group is a few individuals, it will frequently be necessary to call on the commercial growers. A sufficient number of wholesalers and mail-order retail houses have already pledged their support to guarantee that a supply of plants will be no problem. Shipments will generally be in crates of twenty plants, by express collect. Larger shipments can be made if necessary. The sponsoring group will be expected to absorb the express charges. (Although where the sponsoring group is composed of a few individuals and paying the express would be a burden, the express charges will be met from a treasury fund established through the generosity of Elsie Freed.)

Requests for shipments of plants must always be made to the Director, who will place the order on the most conveniently located co-operating grower. The commercial growers are donating the plants, they must not be faced with the problem of deciding whether the requests coming to them are bona fide. They will honor only requests that come from the Director.

The plants coming from the commercial houses will generally be the regular shipping grade of in-bud-or-bloom, although sometimes they will be of different ages. Plants collected from club membership do not need to be specimen plants. It is better to present bud-less young plants that would adapt themselves quickly to a new location and a new (and inexperienced) routine of care rather than beautiful blooming plants that might resent being moved and collapse quickly. Plants in a variety of stages of development are desirable.

One plant per man seems best as a starter. More can be supplied later if it appears advisable.

7. At this point, after the situation has been surveyed and found suitable, and definite decision has been made to proceed, the Director should be notified. If a request for plants is made, the one letter can serve both purposes. A brief report on the type of hospital, interest of officials, and ward in which the group will be established, should be made.

The Director will write a letter to the hospital head confirming the fact that the sponsoring group is acting for the African Violet Society of America and at the same time thanking him for his co-operation.

8. At the meeting at which the plants are actually delivered to their new owners, explanation should be made of only the barest minimum of the essentials of violet care. The routine of watering, and light and temperature requirements, should be covered. But probably not much more. It would be better to give too little rather than too much information. For many of the men, it will be their first experience in caring for a plant, and too much information would make the process sound complex and difficult.

Probably dishes will have to be provided in which the plants will set. Some shipments may have to be potted. but generally potted plants will be shipped.

Definite arrangements should be made to return at some future date (a two week interval between visits is suggested) to provide further instruction.

9. The second session will probably have to be devoted to observing the results to date. correcting errors in understanding or practice, and supplying additional details.

10. Subsequent visits should include instruction in such things as fertilization, starting plants from leaves, potting out, diseases and insects, pollination, raising seedlings, etc., in other words, the normal program of an active and inquiring African violet club.

Sometimes it will be fitting to serve refreshments at these meetings.

11. The Director should be notified when actual placement of the plants has been made, so that the publications can be forwarded. Helen van Pelt Wilson and Mary Margaret Odom have both donated enough of their books that one copy of each can be provided to each hospital group. And a year's subscription to the African Violet Magazine will also be entered for each group.

The name of some responsible individual in the hospital group should be forwarded with the request for the publications so that they can be forwarded directly to the hospital.

Requests for the publications must be made to the Director, not to the authors or editors.

12. As soon as the time seems auspicious, the idea should be suggested to the hospital group that they organize as an African Violet Club. At some locations the proper time may be at the initial meeting, at others it may be months later, or never.

The goal is not simply to form clubs, the goal is to bring violet culture, with its multifold expanding interests. to the veterans, and if organization does not fit into that purpose, it need not be urged at all. But where there is interest, there will generally also be organization.

13. A brief report is to be made to the Director monthly, giving the status of the group, progress to date, problems confronting it, outstanding difficulties or accomplishments, etc.

14. Sponsorship is for one year. By the end of that time the hospital group should be able to go on without help. If it can't, it is doubtful that further expenditure of effort would produce commensurate results.

However, if the sponsoring organization wishes to continue contact after the one year sponsorship has expired, there is no objection to their doing so.

It may be necessary on certain occasions to deviate from the procedure outlined above, but it should be considered as a guide and adhered to whenever possible.

It is recommended to sponsoring clubs that the committee set up to handle the work have continuous existence through the entire length of the sponsorship and not be changed with the annual election of officers. This should give continuity that might not otherwise be obtainable.

No plants are to be sold to the veterans by members of the sponsoring group during the life of the sponsorship. Plants supplied them are to be free of charge, no matter what the source of the plants.

There is no objection to including nurses or other hospital employees in the groups, if their inclusion aids in the attainment of the goal: to introduce violets to disabled veterans. The nurses can provide very valuable help, and judicious gifts of plants to them may go a long way toward getting that help. But care must be exercised that the effort doesn't degenerate to the point where all the plants land on nurses' windowsills.

Many hospitals have greenhouses which supply flowers for various services within the institution. Frequently the patients have access to them. But the total number of patients who can get diversion from activity in the greenhouse is small. Growing violets will be largely a bedside-table or window-sill activity; it neither conflicts with nor is enhanced by the availability of a greenhouse. So the fact that there is a greenhouse on the grounds does not present any deterrent to forming a violet growing group in the hospital.

Resourcefulness may sometimes be needed to avoid "stepping on the toes" of other organizations who also visit the hospitals. Such groups as the Gray Ladies, American Legion Auxiliary, World War II Mothers, and others, have a long record of excellent service. Their co-operation should be sought and used to the fullest extent. But the program should not be turned over to them. Giving instruction in growing African violets involves imparting special knowledge and special skills, and turning the program over to others simply because they are already working in hospitals won't impart either the knowledge or the skills.

All the details on the local level will have to be handled by the sponsoring group. Manifold complexities would be introduced if the Director tried to handle them. The Director will participate in the work only to the extent indicated in the step-wise procedures. Of course, the Director is always available for advice and co-operation.

Several clubs had started work in veterans' hospitals long before the present movement was organized. A number of growers had made quantity gifts of plants. Many individuals have given plants and instruction. So work for veterans is not new to violet growers nor original with the present project. What is provided now that was lacking before is that central direction is given to a wide-spread effort to take the work into as large a number of hospitals as can possibly be reached.

All references so far have been to veterans' hospitals, because that is where primary effort is to be made. But an almost equally promising field is in soldiers' homes. There are a large number of these throughout the country and inmates are equally deserving of attention. Many of the homes are fairly small and have names that do not proclaim their true character, so they might remain unnoticed. Clubs that feel they can't do anything because of distance from a veterans' hospital may find that there is a soldiers' home almost in their back yard.

And it will be surprising if violet enthusiasts don't find other institutions where the inmates would be benefited by being given violets and the necessary early instruction in growing them.

Now that the organization has been set up and the procedures outlined it is up to the Society membership to do the rest. What is needed is workers, people who will give a little of their time to make the lives of our hospitalized veterans a little more enjoyable. Won't you be one of them?

The Director can be reached at the address shown on the inside front cover.

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A WHIMSEY

Lillie L. Jefferies

One Blue Monday, Mentor Boy and Mary Wac, were sitting side by side on the table. Mary Wac said, "Oh I feel so drowsy." Mentor Boy was already droopy, his head on the table. Soon they were both fast asleep and dreamed these dreams . . . A little Red Head Girl with her Curly Special and Rosalie with her Ruffles asked them out to play Dahl's with their friend Blue Bobby. They see a Blue Bird and a Red Bird as they Zig-zag thru the Summer Skies toward the West Coast Amethyst. A Blue Butterfly floats across the Heavenly Blue. They each picked a Nosegay. Their afternoon was Supreme. When a Dainty Maid, Judy, called them they came in with cheeks that were Pink Perfection and Rosy Plum lips, and ate their food with a Blue Scoop and a Red Spoon . . . Now a Marine and a Sailor Boy are both in love with a Mermaid. When they hear she is courting a Commodore and an Admiral they quit her cold, not wishing to be just My 2nd Prize . . . At the Imperial court White King, Orchid Queen and Purple Prince rule by Royal decree . . . Attended by My Lady Marion, My Lady Frances and My Lady Joan they sip Regal Wine. Little Lilac Lady was a Blushing Maiden when the king Commander to stop flirting with Blue Knight and play the Orchid Flute . . . One evening at Twilight as the Purple Mist drifted over the Redland, Jessie and Mrs. Boles went walking to see the Ozark Skies. There was a perfect Royal Sunset. It was Gorgeous. Near Midnight they returned home by Starlight and found Blue Jane with tears in her Blue Eyes. Double Russian, her Hearts Desire, had deserted their Blue Darling for a Painted Ballerina named Red Beauty. Dressed in Blue Velvet and Old Lace she believed that she was no match for her rival who wore Red Ruffles with Myrtle in her hair while Sapphires and Topaz gleamed on her fingers. Desperate she borrowed Alma's Blue hat and an Alice Blue Gown from Frieda. All dressed up she played an Enchantress and won her Blue Treasure back . . .

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DID YOU EVER TAME A WILDING?

Lotta Valor

If so, you learned that a Wilding isn't so easily tamed as one might think. My first experience with them was quite a few years ago when we bought our camp. Quite a patch of ground was so thickly carpeted with pine needles that no growth was visable. I raked and raked until I came down to earth. On this patch I wanted some of our Natives. The words Natural Habitat were unknown to me. Fortunately, many of my early transplantings were acid soil lovers and they lived in spite of me.

As time went on and the Boston Flower Shows featured the Wildings, I began to read all I could lay my hands on. Then I began to cater exclusively to acid soil lovers and herald with delight, many times, one solitary bloom. I didn't have a spectacular arrayment for many a visitor, and sometimes I think I was believed to be a little "hipped" when I thrilled at one solitary yellow lady's slipper or one wee Mayflower blossom, when our woods are full of them. One friend said, "Why such a time over that one Mayflower when Bear Hill is covered with them." Why explain? — she wouldn't have understood. I knew what I had done and was content.

The War-age and grandchildren curbed my activities there, so now the plot just naturally grows without my help. I don't think it means much to the casual observer, except that it is rather pretty, but I know the rhododendron and mountain laurel were thrown away as dead by a local "5 and 10". My Shortia Galacifolia, that sweet little orphan from the Carolinas, last year had more blossoms than a plant specifically mentioned as a success by Boston's Horticulture Magazine. My galyx was beautiful at Christmas time, and I used a lot of it for flower arrangements. The Trilliums, wee pine trees and "what lovely ferns-" all these and many more, are perfectly happy because I fussed and gave them what they wanted.

Then-what house plant could give me the challenge that the Wildings do? You have guessed it. The Saintpaulias. Like my Wildings - they sulk for their native habitat. I don't get impatient, for I waited ten years for the above mentioned rhododendron to blossom. They just won't sprout overnight! I am not so interested in the matured plants grown by someone else, unless I know what I can do myself.

I was delighted to learn of The Violet Magazine, for one learns so much from the experience of others, and everyone is so friendly.

I have six very good plants that I raised last year from leaves. Someone called these Australian violets, but I never have heard that name elsewhere. The parent plant had very shiny heavily veined leaves and very large purple blooms from hers, but, although my own look fine, - - "nary" a bloom as yet. No wonder they intrigue!

I have about fifty leaves in the "chicken feeders" about three months old and not a leaflet in sight, but they look very healthy so I think some fine morning I will get a surprise. Where there is Life, there is hope! I am looking forward to the day when I can say - "Behold-these are all my own children."

I am having a set of shelves put in an Eastern-Northern Bay window, and I know that now and then I am going to fall for some new matured blossoming specimen so - - - I can start more leaves.

Please don't tell anyone, but I am thinking strongly of trying Seeds now that I have the kind friends in the Magazine to guide me.

Perhaps some day I can add to my name "A Nomenclator of the Saintpaulia" - - - that will be the day - - - not quite yet but what a lot I have to look forward to!

I am using a pen name which I have used facetiously over the years when some occasion called for it, and I feel it to be most fitting in this case.

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Dewitt, Iowa

"AFRICAN VIOLET STILL QUEEN OF INDOOR PLANTS"

Rose W. Kinzer

The African Violet Magazine Vol. 1 No. 4 has a very fine article on the growth and propagation of violets. However, there in one section called 'A Short Life Span' which I must discuss further. What does the author do with her violets when they are over three years old? Throw them away? What an end for a 'thing of beauty'!

I have several plants well over three years old. When the under leaves have fallen off and the bare stem protrudes from the ground about an inch, I remove the plant from the pot, loosen the roots and put in fresh dirt, well fertilized. I then pick off more of the lower leaves until I have once more a medium sized plant. I wet the soil in the pot well and plant the violet deep in the dirt so that it is up around the lower leaves. This plant is kept in the shade for two or three days and then placed in the window the same as the rest. Each time I have treated an old 'grandfather' in this way, I have been rewarded by good growth and many more blossoms.

An acquaintance of mine says that she takes a sharp knife and cuts her violets in two, right through the crown, when they get too old and big for their pots. Thus she has two plants for every one before. I have never tried this operation myself, but some day when I have a large plant and small ones of the same variety coming on, I shall do so. All I can say is, this acquaintance has lovely violets, large plants and full of bloom.

Another friend said her husband gave her a "Blue Boy" years ago, that bloomed constantly and grew very large, until at the ripe old age of fifteen years finally got something wrong with it and gave up the ghost. Her care consisted of watering, feeding and replanting when necessary.

I am only a housewife who grows African Violets because I love to grow things. Their beauty and prolific blossoming give me untold enjoyment. I propagate from leaf cuttings, and while I am fond of the little new plants and love to watch them grow and develop and finally blossom, my old plants are like old friends, who have responded happily to my care and given me hours and days of lovely color, and are not to be discarded lightly.

THROW ANOTHER LOG ON THE FIRE

Louise Smouse

Let us go into the basic elements of plant nutrition and determine what a balanced diet should be, in raising better blooming, stronger African Violets.

There are several elements essential to plant life. Some are readily available in sufficient quantity in a good soil. Others need to be supplied.

The essential elements are calcium, phosphorous. iron, baron, sulphur, manganese, nitrogen, magnesium and potassium or potash.

Of these, potash, obtainable from wood ashes, used at the rate of a 5 inch pot to a bushel of soil, should be applied. Potash lends resistance to disease and generally improves both foliage and bloom. Throw another log on the fire and save the ashes. Also the charcoal will help keep soil sweet.

Ammonium sulphate available at your druggist and used one tablespoon to a gallon of water, is a good source of nitrogen which should also be supplied. Nitrogen is the greatest single booster of plant growth and supplied as directed, stunted growth and yellowing leaves will often respond in just a week's time.

Superphosphate is an excellent source of phosphorous needed to stimulate root growth, and bring a plant quickly to bloom. You may prefer to simply use a teaspoon of 5-10-5 fertilizer to each 4 inch pot of soil.

Food should be given when a plant has a good growing start, and is making bud, but not in dull, damp weather. Don't over feed!

We have discussed feeding. We presume it is feeding of a healthy plant. To make sure we aren't feeding a diseased or nematode infected saintpaulia, let us use only sterilized soil for potting. Baking has been suggested or you may use formaldehyde dust which is sold under a trade name. The manufacturer will tell you how to properly use it.

Then again we can not help wondering if an African violet would not do as well in spite of our fussing . . .

MAKE MINE WICK-FED!!!

Daisy Jones

At our 1949 Memphis African Violet Show we had one table devoted exclusively to the culture of African Violets using the wick-fed pots. So many people were interested in the method, I would like to give you some of the details necessary for successfully growing our African Violets in this way and tell you its advantages.

There are many nurseries and florists who supply wick-fed pots in pastel shades at very reasonable prices; they are made of easily cleaned plastic, spun glass wicks which feed water and plant food from reservoir. They are self-watering, sub-irrigating pots. Porcelain wick-fed pots in pastel shades can also be secured and the same fine results obtained but the wick is made of porous clay instead of spun glass. Using the wick-fed method we do not have to water our violets as often; they grow just as well, make good roots, excellent foliage, beautiful blossoms and since there is lower humidity the danger of attack by fungus is reduced. Leaves do not rot when they touch rim of the pot since the chemical salts do not accumulate so readily.

Different aggregates which have been used successfully are sand, gravel, cinders, granite chips, vermiculite, and best of all aggregates is pumice; it is light, porous; rooted plants when transplanted to pumice continue growth without set-back just as though they had been treated with Vitamin B-1.

There are many chemical solutions and excellent plant foods on the market such as Hyponex, Plantabbs, Spessard's Hydroponic Food, Mineral Maid, Thompson's Vitamin B-1, etc. Using these plant foods properly with our wick-fed pots we can expect healthier plants, bigger flowers, more rapid growth and larger growth in plants.

I have just been by to see Mrs. C. R. Gilley, one of our Club members, who was in charge of the African Violet Chemical Table at our Show. Oh, what a beautiful collection of violets she has; all of them in wick-fed pots. Can you imagine anything more beautiful than a White Ruffles in a 7 inch solid turquoise blue wick-fed pot; a large Blue Bird in a Canary Yellow wick-fed pot or a lovely Blue Girl (pat.) in a yellow four inch pot? Mrs. Gilley grows some of her plants in nothing but vermiculite, then again she grows some in rich sandy loam with equally good results.

My next stop finds me talking with Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Hembre. Mr. Hembre is a chemist, so naturally he prefers to grow African violets in sand using chemical solutions and wick-fed pots exclusively. He has been using this type pot for approximately nine years—he has about 25 beautiful violets in five and seven inch wick-feds.

My own personal experience is that I find the Wick-Fed method far superior to using the "Old Fashioned" clay pots. They are more modern and up-to-date, wonderful for glass window shelves . . . so clean . . . no worries about over-watering and I could go on and on singing praises about Wick-Feds. Is there any wonder why I say, MAKE MINE WICK-FED.

ATTENTION CLUBS

The 1950 AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY CONVENTION will be held on May 12 and 13 at the Bellevue Stratford in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. We are extending a cordial invitation to all Local African Violet clubs to take an active part in the convention. Your club is invited to display plants and year books. Remember the popularity of your club will increase extensively if it takes part in our program.

If you belong to a local African Violet club, have your president or secretary contact me and give me the following information as soon as possible;

1. Names and addresses of officers.
2. Number of membership in your group.
3. Number of National membership in your club.
4. Do you desire space set aside for your club plant display; remember the space is limited.
5. Will you enter your club year book?

Have your local club help make the 1950 Convention in the Quaker City the greatest success in the history of the African Violet Society of America.

Mrs. R. J. Schadewald, Chairman

7 Lexington Ave.,

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FROM DECEMBER UNTIL MAY

Alice Benet

Last December when my Blue Boy looked worn and weary after eight months of steady blooming, I turned it out of its pot to wash the roots and repot it. I found part of the roots rotted away. Instead of repotting, I pinched out the center of the crown and placed it in a jar of water to root, as one does a leaf.

After a few weeks I noticed a nice spread of roots, so the little plant was moved to a larger bottle containing Hyponex water (one-fourth teaspoon to one quart water). The plant prospered. As the leaves grew and the roots spread the plant was moved from time to time, and now the roots fill a pint Mason jar.

Once each week the roots are washed in clear water, the jar scrubbed and refilled with fresh Hyponex solution. Add a small piece of charcoal to keep the water sweet, and replace the plant.

This rejuvenated Blue Boy now measures 7½" across and is attractively bedecked in a collar of aluminum foil for support.

When my family asked, "How long do you expect to nurse that baby?" I responded with my own question, "I wonder if it will bloom?" To my joy and surprise, it did, and in May I took the picture.

(Editor's Note: She didn't love her Blue Boy in December as she did in May.)

DO YOU KNOW

Ruth Taber and Emma Lewis

That to promote winter blooming it is well to keep on the dry side in summer?

That a leaf from a pink variety may sport either a white or blue flowering plant?

That you can give your plant a beneficial hair cut?

That a little soot worked in the top of the soil will darken leaves and deepen color of blossoms?

That an eastern exposure is considered the best?

That 60° to 75° is considered the best temperature?

That chilling is likely to cause crown rot?

That charcoal made from hardwood (1 cupful to a gallon of soil) helps to prevent crown rot?

Rain water is best for watering or propagating? Tap water may be drawn the night before and poured off carefully.

That a damaged or broken leaf will still produce plants?

That if the petioles of your plants are too long they are probably not getting enough light? Or they may be too wet?

That too much fertilizer is as bad as not enough?

That gas, dry air or too acid soil will cause buds to drop? Also too heavily fertilized soil?

That ¼ tsp. fermate to a pint of warm water with a little soap added as a spreader will prevent mold? Do not use detergents . . . they are too strong.

That if your plant has stem rot remove all lower leaves, and paint the crown with straight fermate?

That leaf rot may be overcome by painting the brown spots with straight fermate?

That mealy bugs should be removed with alcohol swabs? Badly infested plants should be discarded.

TRIALS AND EXPERIENCES WITH A SMALL GREENHOUSE

Mrs. T. C. Bee

A small greenhouse can have many problems. Our first one had to do with adapting a greenhouse originally intended for the raising of sun loving plants, to the housing and propagation of about 2000 African violets. The first fault to be counteracted was its location on the south side of the house. As it could not be moved, it had to be shaded.

The claim that Saintpaulias require plenty of light to bloom abundantly is an actuality. Direct sunlight, at least too much of it, can be quite detrimental. Bleached leaves are only a part of the results of over-exposure for, under this condition, they do not develop to their full, and oftentimes, graceful naturalness; they remain too compact with foreshortened petioles. This compactness prevents proper air circulation through the foliage, or evaporation from the soil, which, in time, may lead to crown rot, unless the potting mixture is very gritty permitting rapid drainage. To offset the effects of too much sunlight, the outside of the greenhouse was first painted white and the inside lined throughout with white cloth. With this procedure one of our trials had been met and passed.

Among the plants originally raised in the greenhouse were five African violets and at that time they posed no obstacle as they could be shaded by the other plants. The arrival of winter brought its problem. As we were not located near a natural gas main, propane or tank gas was installed for heating. This heat is fine when everything goes right, but it is also expensive. It did not go right here, for shortly after the Holidays the temperature went down to 10 degrees above zero for three nights. On the fourth night the turning on of the gas from the diningroom brought no results. Something was definitely wrong. From the window I can see into the greenhouse and the thermometer read 31 degrees. The plants looked frozen. An old wood stove was carted in from the back porch and fuel from the woodpile in the yard, and we began to build a roaring fire. The stove was set up in the dining room and the communicating window to the greenhouse thrown open in an effort to fight the cold there. After cooking breakfast on the wood burner, and with the sun coming up pretty and bright, I went into the greenhouse with a sick heart. Plants were frozen, but only in spots, probably due to the fact that all were on the dry side. Three of the violets survived and in thirty days you would not have known that they had been subjected to cold, as they had recovered. Our downfall had been a drop of water that had collected and frozen in the feed-line. Since that time we have had no trouble of like nature, but when the temperature falls I still sleep with one eye open. Last year when there was such an acute shortage of gas, I spent two days out there in an effort to keep warm.

Later, this heating installation brought another problem, and near calamity, for a shortage of copper pipe necessitated the use of one made of aluminum. Corrosion and a leak! - to those familiar with the damages of gas, I need not go any further but, for the unenlightened, I can definitely speak of its results. Leaves become thickened and curled and can, overnight, turn juicily brown and dead. Need I describe my feelings as I removed leaves by the hundreds? Also for those not initiated into the realm of gas damage, or familiar with the true signs of cyclamen mite, they might be confused. I should like to warn against hasty decisions that gas affected plants are hosts to the dreaded mite.

Another problem to be met was that of watering. As afore-mentioned, the house was not built originally for African violet culture so no provision was made for benches constructed so that the plants could be watered from the bottom. We now have to do it from the top. Violets can be watered in this manner safely, if precautions are taken. We do it early in the morning before the sun gets around so that the foliage can dry, thus preventing "sun-spot" or leaf burn. Watering at night causes condensation on the plants with the lowering temperature and can result in "black spot", or crown rot; and, in extremes, frosting of the plants.

Chances of insect infestation in a greenhouse are more numerous than in a home collection, so a definite spraying program must be initiated. A good insecticide should be used but even that should be varied occasionally with another preparation to prevent the insects from building up an immunity to one spray. Sodium selenate will control mites but it does nothing to mealy bug. Volck and Black Leaf 40 can be used in the latter case. It should be remembered that Volck is an oil spray and should not be used too often or it may be harmful to the plants. Volck or Black Leaf 40 can be used at the rate of one teaspoon to the gallon of warm water - giving the plants a good bath and a soft brushing to remove the insect eggs.

Ventilation in a greenhouse cannot be over-emphasized. In winter, when the days are damp and sunshine has little power, ventilation must be assured. The heater should be turned up, or the thermostat set to insure an even temperature of about 65 degrees but keep some of the ventilators open at least during part of the day. In summer when the temperature runs from 75 to 90 degrees all the ventilators should be open and daily or twice daily sprinkling of the floors will help in providing proper humidity and lowering of the temperature. On the other hand, African violets will not tolerate direct drafts so ventilators should be screened with loosely woven cloth and, if the door is kept open it too should be protected with a cloth screen.

(Continued on botton next Page)

REPOTTING TO ELIMINATE PESTS

Clara Soto

Several months ago, I discovered that there were little worms, or wormlike bugs in the soil of fifteen African Violet plants which I had bought. It is hard to know whether to call them worms or bugs, for they have characteristics of both.

They are about one-eighth inch long and are white. They live inside the soil, but when the plants are watered from the top, the bugs come to the top of the water. They seem to glide on top of the water in the saucer when watering from the bottom. When I tried to catch them with my fingers, they seemed to jump and usually succeeded in getting away. In an old plant, the bugs or worms were so old and big and fat, they were almost gray, and about one-fourth inch long.

Some of these plants died. The leaves curled back so the midrib did not show at all. Soon the leaves grew limp, became transparent and died.

Since repotting old plants injures the roots, I tried to find a way to kill these pests in the soil without removing the violets, and was successful. I had heard of sodium selenate, but after reading more about it, decided not to try it, - - at least until I learned more about it.

Finally, last Spring, I discovered that besides the bugs in the soil, my plants had three different varieties of bugs on the leaves and stems, and also a very small beetle-like bug running around on the fungus growth on the outside of the pot.

I decided to try repotting. Here is the method used:

I took the plant out of the pot, putting the clump of soil and roots into a bowl of water, thereby loosing the soil from around the roots, and dipping the plant up and down until all soil was removed.

I then made a solution of one quart of water to one-fourth teaspoon of "Evergreen Spray" in another bowl. I dipped the entire plant, roots, leaves and all, into this solution, dipping it up and down three or four times to make sure all pests were killed.

Next, I held the plant under the faucet and sprayed it with warm water to wash off the "Evergreen Solution".

Now, the plants were ready to be planted in soil which had been sterilized by baking for thirty minutes in a 150° oven. I believe it should not be baked longer or at a higher temperature, in order to keep the soil "alive". The pots used were sterilized by letting them stand in scalding water.

I would like to say that I put some soil into the pot, wet it, made a hole in the soil big enough and deep enough to hold the roots (spread out), holding the plant with one hand while putting in dry soil to fill the pot, tapping the pot several times so the dry soil would be sure to envelope the roots. If any air pockets are left around the roots, the roots and soil may get moldy, cause sour soil, and eventually kill the plants.

This is a long and tedious method, but was very successful. None of the pests have returned. All the plants lived, and while it took six months to a year for some of them to resume normal growth and bloom, it was well worth the trouble and the time to have my African Violets again in such good condition.

BACK ISSUES OF MAGAZINE

Reprints of Volume 1, Numbers 2, 3 and 4 are now available in limited numbers—cost 50c each post paid. Orders will be mailed after January 1st.

Not all back issues of Volume 2 are now in print. Requests for these must be made on penny post card and you will be notified which ones are available.

Editor.

GREENHOUSE EXPERIENCE Cont.

Every greenhouse owner can tell you one thing - no matter how large the house, it will not for long remain adequate for the avid Saintpaulia collector or grower. My advice, in this event, is to do as we have - build shelves every place that will hold them.

AUTOMATIC WATERING FOR YOUR AFRICAN VIOLETS

Send 45¢ for one Glaswick, holder saucer and instructions (3 for $1.25) or 50¢ for 3 wicks only - postpaid. Use your own pots. System recommended by Dr. Post of Cornell. Remarkable results.

ATLAS ASBESTOS COMPANY
Box AV North Wales, Pa.

SOIL RECIPES FROM THE PACIFIC COASTAL REGION

Clarissa Harris

RECIPE NUMBER 1.

EQUAL PARTS OF: Garden Soil, Sand, Leafmold (redwood), Peat Moss, Steer Fertilizer.

This is sifted thru a screen. I then add 1 cup of charcoal, broken in tiny pieces the size of a pea, to one gallon of soil mixture.

I grow my violets on shelves in a glassed-in front porch, which is about 10 feet square.

Due to the fact that we live on a 150 foot cliff directly above the ocean, I had many difficulties trying to control the reflected light from the ocean. It was so terrifically strong that it turned some of the leaves black and others yellow with ugly black veins.

Instead of growing up, they all turned down and hugged the pots. They were a mess. I was finally able to correct this situation by installing aluminum venetian blinds on the west windows; redwood slats on the south windows with plastic and marquisette curtains, and plastic and marquisette curtains in the east windows. It took months of experimenting to finally control the light.

I start all my leaves in water and place them in brown bottles in a warm light location. I am careful to use water which has stood 24 hours so that all chlorine and water purifiers have been released. I find that this method produces plants faster for me than any other way I have tried.

GENEVIEVE MARSH . . .

a member of the Los Angeles Society.

RECIPE NUMBER 2.

POTTING SOIL FOR AFRICAN VIOLETS:

4 cups of Leaf Mold
4 cups of Garden Soil
2 cups of Rotted Manure
2 cups of Vermiculite
1 cup Nitro-Humas
1 cup of Charcoal
¼ cup of Bone Meal

Sift garden soil. Sterilize for one hour in the oven at 200 degrees. Mix all ingredients together. Moisten well and your soil is ready for use.

DORICE TRIGG . . .

a member of the Los Angeles Society.

RECIPE NUMBER 3.

Mrs. R. E. Ross of Newport Beach, Calif., is a strong advocate of Georgia Peat. She has a marvelous success with the following soil mixture.

To equal parts of Georgia Peat and Leaf Mold she adds a small quantity of loam and sand.

She starts her leaf cuttings in Georgia Peat and Leaf Mold. Mrs. Ross advises that she always waters with warm water and feeds well established plants every 10 days with Plantabbs. To a 6 inch pot one Plantabb is used by pressing it into the soil at the edge of the pot. She never allows the plants to dry out, but keeps them evenly moist at all times. Her methods certainly produce results for her plants are large and profusely in bloom, and the blossoms hold on for a very long time, thereby producing a very beautiful display of flowers. She keeps her plants clean by spraying with Pysect, says it is a sure cure for Mealy Bug.

RECIPE NUMBER 4.

Unit of measure and variance of ingredients are the complicating factors in giving a recipe for a potting mixture. In order to simplify the job one coffee can equals 5% and 20 coffee cans the whole or 100%.

Leaf Mold (9 cans) 45%
Black Loam (5 cans) 25%
Sharp Sand (2 cans) 10%
Vermiculite (Coarse) (3 cans) 15%
Bonemeal (½ can) 2½%
Charcoal (½ can) 2½%

The Leaf Mold needs description as it is not a commercial grade. A friend brings it to me from under the Redwoods of Northern California. I use it without screening even though it carries unbroken Redwood cones and leaves. The content of woods soil is high for leaf mold.

Mix the first three ingredients and sterilize by baking or fumigation, add the remaining parts to complete mixture.

HARVEY COX . . .

a successful grower of African Violets of Long Beach, Calif. and a member of the Society.

RECIPE NUMBER 5.

I am very much of a beginner in African violet culture. Not quite two years ago a neighbor gave me a few leaves. She had a lovely big plant of Blue Boy that was always in bloom, and I just couldn't keep my eyes off it whenever I was in her house. She could root leaves in water but could never start a plant. Another neighbor would start them for her and get lovely plants, but no flowers. Well, human nature being what it is I decided to do my best.

I placed my leaves in water and then started out to find what should be done from there on. Very few people I met knew anything about violets and with those that did—no two had the same answer. I

finally found Helen Van Pelt Wilson's pamphlet, published in 1945 and that I have followed closely ever since.

My husband said my leaves never would grow—I looked at them too much. I did, many times a day, and it was a very important day when finally the little leaves popped up out of the soil. Now my original Blue Boys are almost always in bloom.

After my leaves are rooted, I set them out in a 2½ or 3 inch pot, that has been dipped in paraffin. Line Sphagnum moss in the bottom and a little way up the sides. Use a mixture of 1/3 sand (Builders or coarse); 1/3 soil; 1/3 leaf mold. Keep pots fairly wet at first, and gradually lessen until finally soil is just moist.

I use about ½ pellet of Vigoro to a 4 inch pot every couple of months, for the older plants. This has seemingly given them all they need. Am going to try out Hyponex soon.

At first I used Adhesive tape to mark my pots. Now I use a Masking tape (used in papering and painting), it is a little tougher and withstands water better.

I was perfectly satisfied with my Blue Boys for awhile, then I found Pink Beauty at a school sale. When I started out to look for other colors there my troubles began. Went to nursery after nursery—no luck. I finally did manage to get an Orchid Beauty and a Blushing Maiden direct from a grower, and was I thrilled!

Now I have 21 varieties - mostly young plantlets, several of which are full of buds. Also some names unknown, and leaves in various stages.

I joined the National Society in January and enjoy the magazine so much. In February the Alhambra chapter was formed and I haven't missed a meeting even though a lot of planning etc., has to be done to get there and back. Not having anyone to leave my youngsters with, they've been to all but one of the meetings. Each of them has a plant and several leaves started. Judy, age 4, was just given as a birthday present, a plant named Judy. Maybe Mommie can rate a leaf after it gets a little bigger. Nothing like a family project, you know.

GLADYS ALLARD, Duarte, Calif.

RECIPE NUMBER 6.

Mrs. Viola Schilling, recently moved to Southern California from St. Louis, Mo.

"About my soil formula? It is still in the experimental process. It was some time before I was able to get sand, etc. out here. Never had much success with leaves forming baby plants in St. Louis. However I got a "bright" idea and my husband carried it out for me.

Using a large size "lug" box we cut out windows or openings in both the sides

(Cont. bottom next column)

MISS SAINTPAULIA

I'm just a little violet
That sits upon your stand,
I'm a happy little person tho-
Some things you well could mend.
I love to see you smile at me
And show me to your friends
I love their admiration
On such my life depends.
But oh, I could be happy
If my owner understood
The life I have been used to --
Light, soil and also food.
Now water, some folks wonder
If I like a lake of mud
Or if a dry, dry prairie
By me is understood.
No, not a dry, dry prairie
And not a lake of mud
I'm such a simple person
Extremes are not my mood.
My home was on the mountain
In crevices of stone
With trees to shade my colors
Till I began to roam.
Now here I am a captive
Not unhappy, as you see
For I fill your home with beauty
If you do take care of me.
Please, love me and remember
A place out of the sun,
None but tepid water
Beneath my feet must come.
And never let my top soil
Get wet or very damp
But just a little water
When dry or over-cramped,
My crown stands high and proud
Above a fingered stem
High up above the pot bed
Where leaves must never bend.
I am a hearty eater,
Perhaps you understand
But I bloom and bloom forever
And rest do not demand.
So feed me much of plant food,
And love me every day,
I'll live and be so happy
To do my part - alway.

Harriett Reed Clemo

and ends of the box and covered these openings with "Vita-lite," as it is called, a sort of green plastic transparent cloth. I had seen it out here at hardware stores. We also made a lid frame and covered it.

It gives plenty of light, even temperature, humidity, easy to carry, a sort of miniature glasshouse at practically no expense. I had read about these made of glass but glass runs expensive, is breakable, and heavy (if you want to move the rooting leaves or baby plants in pots to a better light at times.)

One box has the lid hinged but we did not even do that with the second one. We painted the box white, both inside and outside, and this reflects more light and makes it more attractive."

REGISTRATION

Committee on Registrations
Boyce M. Edens, Chairman

Applications for the registration of twenty-one separate varities of African violets were received and recorded during the period from June 1, 1949 to September 30, 1949, as follows:

BIG MIKE - - by Mrs. Irvin R. Furnish, Florence, Indiana, June 30, 1949.

BLUE BEAUTY - - by Mrs. Irvin R. Furnish, Florence, Indiana, June 30, 1949.

CUSTARD CUP - - by Mrs. Irvin R. Furnish, Florence, Indiana, June 30, 1949.

IONANTHA SUPREME - - by Mrs. Irvin R. Furnish, Florence, Indiana, June 30, 1949.

LADY SLIPPER - - by Mrs. Homer C. Foltz, P. O. Box 267, Lewistown, Penn., July 14, 1949.

LUANA - - by Mrs. Irvin R. Furnish, Florence, Indiana, June 30, 1949.

MARINE - - by Mrs. C. H. Harris, 757 Athens Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif., August 10, 1949.

ORCHID EYES - - by George P. McFarland, 515 S. Walnut St., West Chester, Penn., July 19, 1949.

OROS WHITE GIRL - - by Mrs. Frank Oros, Route 1, Wadsworth, Ohio, August 26 1949.

RIPPLING BLUE - - by Mrs. John C. Doell, 890 Klem Road, Webster, New York, September 15, 1949.

TUNIA'S CLEVELAND INDIAN - - by Mrs. Frank Pochurek, 14225 McCracken Rd., Garfield Heigrts, Ohio, August 1, 1949.

BLUE ANGEL - - by Mrs. Irvin R. Furnish, Florence, Indiana, June 30, 1949.

BLUE SNOW - - by Mrs. Homer C. Foltz, P. O. Box 267, Lewistown, Penn., July 14, 1949.

DARK EYES - - by Mrs. Irvin R. Furnish, Florence, Indiana, June 30, 1949.

LADY CATHERINE - - by Mrs. Velma Davis, 306 S. Locust, Jefferson, Iowa, July 20, 1949.

LOVE BIRDS - - by Mrs. Homer C. Foltz, P. O. Box 267, Lewistown, Penn., July 23, 1949.

McFARLAND'S BLUE WARRIOR - - by George P. McFarland, 515 S. Walnut St., West Chester, Penn., July 19, 1949.

MOONGLOW - - by Mrs. Homer C. Foltz, P. O. Box 267, Lewistown, Penn., July 16, 1949.

OROS DUBONNET - - by Mrs. Frank Oros, Route 1, Wadsworth, Ohio, August 26, 1949.

PRINCESS LEILA - - by Mrs. Velma Davis, 306 S. Locust, Jefferson, Iowa, July 20, 1949.

SKY BLUE SUPREME - - by Mrs. Irvin R. Furnish, Florence, Indiana, June 30, 1949.

These 21 varieties, most of which are of recent origin and may, therefore, be considered new ones, are hereby published in accordance with Section 20 of our Code Of Rules For Nomenclature And Registration, which provides:

"The Committee on Registration will publish all applications for registration in the African Violet Magazine, the official organ of African Violet Society of America, Inc., with notice that objections to be effective must be filed with the Chairman of Committee on Registrations within six weeks of such publication. If no objection is made, registration may then become permanent and accordingly so published in a subsequent issue of the African Violet Magazine. In the event of objection to registration, decision will rest with the Executive Board of the Society".

Anyone who knows a sound reason why any one of the foregoing varieties of African violets ought not to be registered with the Society by the name indicated, or for other reasons, should immediately file his or her objection to registration with the Committee. All such objections must be adequately detailed in a letter addressed to the Chairman at 2694 Lenox Road N. E., Atlanta 5, Georgia.

An expression of sincere appreciation is due those who have made use of our Service in the registration of these twenty-one varieties. They have already been assured that the variety names under which their originations may be finally recorded as registered, cannot be registered with the Society in the meantime by anyone else. This is a form of protection against name infringement that registration provides.

The Committee has in processes of consideration uncompleted applications for the registration of some two dozen other new varieties. Just as rapidly as these applications are completed, publication of them will be made in an appropriate future issue of the Magazine.

We do not anticipate any appreciable problems arising in the future that will prevent the registration of most new varieties soon after they are tested and introduced either by amateur or commercial growers. But we are concerned, in a very real way, regarding registration of the older varieties and the species. Particularly are we concerned with the early registration of different varieties, both the seedlings and sports, that were originated prior to June 30, 1948. These valuable older varieties are the real pace makers and most certainly must be recorded in our registration records along with the newer varieties. The true names and description of these older varieties are required to complete our records.

(Continued on next Page)

The Homing Pigeon

(By action of the Board of Directors, new members joining the Homing Pigeon after July 31, 1949, must be members of the National Society.)

Dear Pigeon Members:

How pleasant to be serving as your temporary Directress!

My attention has been called by a number of Directors, to the failure of some to send their courtesy cards. Please, please send your courtesy cards each round. It will be much appreciated, and will help keep our Pigeons safer in their flight from one to the other.

Mrs. James Cooper, Excelsior Springs, Mo., says, "In order to avoid the last minute rush, why not do as one or two of the members in our unit, who write part of their letter, long before the Pigeon is at their door. In this way many of the interesting happenings are not forgotten."

Unit No. 40 reports the following listing of plants most similar . . .
Double Orchid Beauty, Regal Wine, Fischers' Double Dark Lavender and Fischers' Masterpiece.

Purple Prince and Merkles' Red Purple.
Neptune and Lady Marion. (not Fischers' My Lady Marion)

Red Amazon and duPont Tu-tone.
Blue Eyes and Blue Skies.
Gray Lady, Tinted Lady and Sky Blue.

Unit No. 11 also finds similarity in these . . .

Plum Satin and Mauve.
Lancaster Red, Red Spoon and Droopy.

"I did not find Optox affected either the soil or the blooming of plants. I sprayed my collection once each week all summer. I believe my Amazons prefer indirect light. If they are in an East window they should be set on the right hand side, but if in a West window they should be set on the left hand side. In this way they receive good light, but not direct sun," says Mrs. Duff Wilson.

Esther Schadewald contributes the following from the members of Unit No. 16.

Rain water or melted snow will root leaves quicker because it is soft water.

To kill Springtails water with 1 teaspoon Lysol to 1 quart warm water. Three waterings from the bottom usually suffices.

Army surplus stores sell bread trays 24x40 for from 50c to 95c.

Dampen soil with Hyponex solution before separating young plants from the mother leaf.

Dip new flower pot rims in melted paraffine to prevent stems of leaves from rotting.

Do not plant rooted leaves too deep. It takes too long for the crowns to reach the surface.

Suggestion from Louise Brewer . . . Put some leaves in water with Hy-Grow, and all of the little hairs on the stem will grow into roots.

To combat Mealy Bugs spray with a solution of warm water and rubbing alcohol . . . half water and half alcohol, advises Mrs. G. E. Rhodes.

Mabel Rodabaugh, Coshocton, Ohio, of Unit No. 53, contributes a nice poem I am sure you will enjoy.

Go, little Pigeon, on your flight,
Up above the town's bright light.
On to others spreading cheer,
Wing your way throughout the year.
Now I send you on your way,
But will watch again each day,
For your return with more good news,
Of this grand group's Saintpaulia views.

Thanks a million for your interesting ideas. Do sign each individual name with the contributions so that we may hear from as many of our Pigeon Members as possible.

Sincerely yours,

Myrtle Radtke (Conductress)

REGISTRATION Cont.

Recognizing that the majority of the older varieties were originated by commercial growers, a special invitation has been sent to fifty of the principal commercial growers and dealers throughout the Country to register, free of registration fee cost, all the different varieties registered by them and offered for sale in a published list or catalog on or before June 30, 1948. This invitation is hereby extended to every individual amateur grower. In this connection, it should be emphasized that our registration service is established both for members and non-members of the Society. A sufficient supply of Registration forms can be secured from the Chairman of the Committee on Registration by anyone who desires to register either a new or old variety with the Society.

PROPAGATING AFRICAN VIOLETS

Estelle R. Bentley

Not all of us have the facilities or the equipment described in the flower magazines concerning the propagation of violets or other house plants. Don't be frightened and discouraged. You can make some equipment of your own and be able to raise enough for yourself, or if very ambitious, sell a few or give them away to your friends.

I had a Putnam heater which we purchased from a mail order house and which was used for heating water for chickens. I decided to try it out on violets. Now the chickens are drinking cold water! This heater is 8½ inches in diameter and burns kerosene. It will run about a month on a quart of oil.

On this, I placed a few cleats of wood, so it would not become too warm. You can regulate it by turning the wick up or down. On this, I placed an aluminum roaster pan. Of course, you could use the entire pan for rooting cuttings, but I used a bread pan, with nail holes in the bottom for drainage.

For rooting cuttings, I used a sharp sand and vermiculite, and had very good success with this. When potting the little plants I used vermiculite, peat moss, sand and rich soil. The extra space in the roaster pan was used to set the young plants in. A little bottom heat gives them a great "send-off".

If you have electricity you could easily make yourself one by placing a 15 watt bulb in any container which is fireproof, plug in with an extension cord and use the same method. You should have some holes in the side for circulation of air.

African violets seem to be slow growing, and I decided if the little plants had bottom heat they would grow much faster. My husband made a bench of scraps of lumber picked up around the place. It consists of a box about 20 inches square on the inside and 4 inches deep, the bottom of galvanized sheeting, but I should prefer aluminum. The top is open, of course. Under this is placed another box of the same size, except it is 6 inches deep, lined with asbestos. There should be an air space in each corner. We do this by placing a strip of insulating felt, leaving about an inch in each corner. Place your exposed wiring sockets 6½ inches in from each of the four corners. There should be a baffle to distribute the heat. This we arranged by placing a tin can over each of the 15 watt bulbs. Cut away part of the sides or punch many holes in the cans.

It should be wired in parallel so equal heat will be distributed to each bulb. If you do not understand this, ask your electrician. It will be easily understood by anyone having a knowledge of simple electric wiring. Bore a hole at some convenient place for the entrance of your electric cord.

We put this bench on legs about the height of a table. By putting nail holes in your metal sheet, you can use it for sowing seed and rooting cuttings, or by using an extra container such as the bread pan for this, you could use the extra space for setting in your young plants. I use mine for setting in the young plants, using about an inch of sand in the bottom of the box. This will distribute the heat evenly.

For transplanting violets, I use plastic flower pots which are bought at the 10¢ store. If you can't find these, get the plastic cups and drill a hole in the bottom. They make very lovely containers. Use this bottom heat for a couple of months or so and watch your plants "just hum".

This "propagator" should not cost you more than $2.00 or $3.00. You can use packing boxes for the lumber. And don't let anyone tell you African violets are hard to grow. At least, they are not hard to start. Of course, no plant will thrive and bloom without care. We need to study and know their special requirements.

Good luck to all lovers of the beautiful house plant, the African violet.

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YOUR LOCAL AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY

by Esther E. Schadewald

If you have the desire to form an African Violet Club in your community the following suggestions may prove helpful:

1st Meeting: Have your friends who are interested in growing African Violets meet at your home for the purpose of forming a club. Friends who are members of other Garden Clubs can be especially helpful in planning the future programs for your club.

2nd Meeting: Appoint temporary officers to hold office for a term of six months. The officers should preferably be members of The African Violet Society of America. The temporary officers should be President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Have the officers agree on a Board Meeting date before the next meeting to decide on dues. The program for this meeting might be a "Stump the Experts" program. Your more experienced growers could be asked to act as "Experts" to answer the questions asked by other members.

After six months' time the President should appoint a nominating committee. All nominees should have been contacted prior to meeting date, when they name their candidates. Additional nominees may be named from the floor at the meeting. Members may elect their new officers at this meeting. They should include a Program Chairman, Hospitality Chairman, Membership Chairman, Librarian and Historian, Publicity and Flower Show Chairman.

Be sure to insist on your members growing 'known' varieties only, especially those varieties which have been sanctioned by the National Society. Exception to this rule is allowed if new varieties are grown from seed. Remember that if your members are allowed to call their plant Betty or Joan or Mrs. Smith, they are hindering the African Violet Society of America by duplicating varieties. Have them be sure that their plant is a new variety before giving it a new name.

The African Violet Society allows your club to retain fifty cents on each National membership. Have your treasurer send the Two Dollar and fifty cent balance with application for membership to Mr. Warren Gottshall, P. O. Box 901, Alexandria, Virginia. Additional club fees may be had by charging guests a twenty-five cent attendance fee. A Plant auction is lots of fun and will bring additional funds into your club.

It is not necessary to draw up By-Laws for the first six months period at least, because changes will be needed to meet your club requirements. When your new President takes office she may appoint a committee to draw up By-Laws for your club.

Your future club programs may include leaf or plant exchanges, a tour of Commercial Hothouses growing African Violets. Violet questionaires to be filled in by members, talks by members on disease control or cross-pollination with charts. "Tips for Violet Care" is an interesting subject and will make good scrap book methods of propagating violets. To give a demonstration by chart or display always makes a telk more interesting. Other programs could include a Christmas party, an arrangement for a table setting, a program on judging for shows or a talk on soil needs. An exchange of speakers among clubs could be arranged if transportation is provided for the speaker.

Programs are not absolutely necessary during July and August; if meetings are held during the vacation months they should be in the form of a picnic.

When your club is one year old you are ready for your first Violet Show. Your Show Chairman will pick her own aides which will include a Co-Chairman, Staging Chairman, Placement Chairman, Registration Chairman, Booth Chairman, Hospitality Chairman, Publicity Chairman and Entry Chairman.

The proceeds from your booth should defray the expenses of your show, if plants and plant needs are donated by your members. Register your plants in advance of your show so that your Placement Chairman will have some idea of the amount of space needed for the plants. Your Entry Chairman can check your entries on the date of entry. It is not essential to give prizes other than ribbons at your show. A sure way to cause no hard feelings is not to give prizes or ribbons at your annual show, but rather give them at the monthly meetings to create friendly competition. Inexpensive prizes such as Plant foods may be given for the Quizz Contest.

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RESEARCH REVEALS RODENT AS VIOLETS VILE VIOLATOR

By Roelif Loveland

Consider the strange case of the exploding African violet!

It was a nice, quiet little African violet plant up to a couple of days ago. It sat in the sunroom minding it own business and thinking about whatever it is that violets consider when in a contemplative mood.

And then the darn thing started exploding!

Perhaps explode is the wrong word. At any rate, when we came into the room we could see where the soil had been tossed out of the pot onto the floor—and there was a deep hole in the pot where the dirt had been.

Obviously, in such a case one thinks of certain little furry animals to be seen anywhere. It could not have been Kilts, the Scottie, for he is far too fat and lazy and, besides, he would have knocked the potted plant over.

We swept up the soil and put it back into the pot and watered it down well—and the next morning we discovered that the same thing had happened again. It was time to do something.

Various explanations were given by our friends. Trying, most charitably, to stay away from the possibility of a mousie, they suggested that perhaps African violets developed a pocket of gas around the roots; that the growth of the roots forced out the soil. One friend even said that roots frequently would break a pot and you'd come downstairs to find both pot and earth scattered all over a room.

Helen Grant Wilson, Plain Dealer garden editor (Cleveland, Ohio), struck straight from the shoulder.

"I have had the same report from other people who had African violets," she said. "But I don't think it's the roots. I'm afraid (she lowered her voice just in case anybody should happen to be listening)—I'm afraid you have a mouse or maybe a chipmunk. To keep the African violet from exploding any more, I would suggest a nice little trap with a dainty piece of cheese."

But why should a mousie pick on an African violet? It did not make sense to me. I have never eaten an African violet, but I am sure it does not taste like cheese.

Still fighting against the unhappy thought of sharing one's home with a mouse, no matter how gentlemanly and tidy Mr. Mousie might be, we sought further opinion and got it from Helen Pochurek.

Mrs. P. listened patiently to the strange tale of the exploding violet.

"This curious manifestation," she said, "has happened to a lot of people who raise African violets. It has even happened to me. For some reason or other, a mouse just loves to nibble on the leaves of an African violet."

I still hate to believe it. But the mystery of the nonshrinking violet is becoming intolerable. Better the admitted fact of a dead mousie than a nervous breakdown. Dr. Watson, I shall buy a trap!

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HUMIDITY

Ethel and Pearl Fitzsimmons

Our violets which are of blooming age are located on a back porch which is glassed in and insulated, and has windows on the North and East. We keep the violets there all winter and leave the kitchen door open at all times except when we wish to increase the humidity.

When the furnace is going and the humidity is apt to be too low for the plants to bloom, we have a little gadget called the "Boilquick" which is placed in a bucket of water, and attached to the light socket. Soon the steam flies. The door between the kitchen and porch is kept closed until the humidity reaches above 75 degrees. We invested in a small instrument which records both temperature and humidity and keep it on a shelf with the violets. We usually use the "Boilquick" twice a day.

Even this summer when the humidity was very high, the outdoor air did not produce the good results that our electrical device did.

We once heard a speaker say, "The ladies who have their violets in the kitchen have the best blooming plants because they get the humidity they love from the cooking steam." We know he was right. If the humidity is below 40 degrees saintpaulias will not bloom. Our experience has been that they like the humidity to be from about 50 degrees to 75 degrees.

Plant inspection time at the Fitzsimmons' home

AFRICAN VIOLETS FOR CHRISTMAS

Ruth Dahnke

With the Christmas holidays coming, perhaps a suggestion is timely for African Violets wrapped as gifts or to be sold to customers. Our Florist is generous in selling metallic paper in appropriate colors to decorate African Violets; perhaps yours will be. Cut a square of paper large enough to bring up around the pot and extend beyond. Turn some corners up, the others down. Wrap a corsage wire with the same paper, bend it and insert in the soil at the edge of the pot to form a handle. It makes a most attractive basket for African Violets. Warn everyone against picking the basket up by the handle; they invariably do. You will be surprised how many men and boys turn to African Violets for gifts at Christmas as well as Valentine Day and Easter. The idea can be repeated with a different variety many times. Of course you can expect telephone calls from the recipient as to the care of the plant, and it is always fun to hear from time to time how well the plant likes its new home.

This brings to mind our Kansas University Football player, next door. Last Christmas he went sliding across the lawn, struggling to keep his balance, but holding the African Violet in its basket well covered with tissue paper, high above his head. Feb. 13th, he repeated the idea with an African Violet for a Valentine. The next afternoon our little athlete called from school to say the coach wanted an African Violet fixed like Carl's for his wife. I knew his fraternity flowers were the red rose and the purple violet, so had Mentor Boy ready. To my surprise he didn't have to wait for his wife to notice it was the Sigma Phi Epsilon flower. One also graces the apartment of the house mother of the Sig Eps at Kansas University, and was on display at the house warming to show their new house. It is always nice to know your little plants are appreciated and you can add to the pleasure by knowing Club or Society flowers and colors. African Violets fortunately have quite a range in color, and it can be carried out in the color of the metallic paper you use. It may be well to keep a list of the varieties some of your friends have so that you may suggest new varieties when they are again to receive the always welcome gift.

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CLUB NEWS

Maxine Wangberg, Club Editor
1920 W. 3rd St.
Perry, Iowa.

SAN GABRIEL SOCIETY MEETING

Mrs. Ernest Mackey, president of the San Gabriel chapter of African Violet Society of America, Inc., had the privilege and pleasure of an interview over channel No. 2 Television on the Garden Chat program with Mr. J. J. Littlefield, well know Author, Radio and Television commentator. Several beautiful violet plants of Mrs. Mackey's were on display. Helpful hints on growing, watering and feeding, also the many pests and their control were given.

The San Gabriel Chapter has an opportunity table at each meeting where plants and rare leaves are sold for ways and means. At the September 22, 1949, meeting this chapter held a round table consisting of their members with Mrs. C. W. English, Pasadena, on soil preparation; Mrs. Chas. Chervenka, Monte Rey Park, on feeding; Mrs. Grace D. Hoag, San Gabriel, propagation; Mrs. H. F. Philips, Alhambra, on growing; Mrs. Fred P. George, Temple City, light, air, water, humidity; Mrs. Ernest Mackey on pests and their control; Mr. J. J. Littlefield acted as moderator. Mr. Littlefield, for the past 22 years, has been actively engaged in gardening in Southern California. He is a member of the San Gabriel chapter as well as many garden clubs throughout Southern California, and is familiar with garden problems of the home gardener. He said, "Gardening provides one of the most profitable and enjoyable avocations. No highly technical or elaborate preparation is required to become a good gardener."

LIVINGSTON COUNTY CLUB ORGANIZED

A group of Violet enthusiasts met at the Masonic Hall, Livonia, N. Y. on July 13, 1949 from several surrounding towns and organized the Livingston County African Violet Club. Mrs. Fred Flory presided as chairman of the meeting.

The following officers were elected,

President, Mrs. Ray Colegrove
1st V. Pres., Mrs. Mabel Jenks
2nd V. Pres., Mrs. Kenneth Gillette.
Secretary, Miss Louise Heberton
Treasurer, Mrs. Everett Hayward
Press Corr., Mrs. Donald Sharpe

Mr. Glenn Horton of Pennyan, N. Y. gave a talk on "Soil and Care of African Violets". A round table discussion was held. Refreshments were served.

TOPEKA SAINTPAULIA SOCIETY

The Topeka Saintpaulia Society, Topeka, Kansas was organized on July 22, 1949 and holds its meetings on the third Friday of each month. Two parties are planned for the year as well as a tea and exhibition in the Spring. A shut-in project is to be financed thru the sale of plants which are to be grown from leaves donated by all the members.

Officers for this club are:
President, Mrs. Joseph Mitlawski
V. Pres., Mrs. Charles Montgomery, Jr.
Secretary, Mrs. M. C. Dean

CLUB AT CRYSTAL LAKE

The Crystal Lake African Violet Club of the Crystal Lake area in Illinois organized recently and elected the following officers:

President, Mrs. Robert Kirwin
V. Pres., Mrs. William F. Lucke
Secretary, Mrs. Wm. F. Nelson
Treasurer, Mrs. Roy McLaughlin
Program Comm., Mrs. Harry Adams
Mrs. H. E. Hann
Publicity, Mrs. H. R. Patterson
Tele. Comm., Mrs. W. Saggers
Mrs. J. Williams
Transportation, Mrs. C. Millar

This new club, membership limited to 25, meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month and is aiming for educational programs.

WOODLAND AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB

The Woodland African Violet Club of Anniston, Alabama, was organized Tuesday, March 29, 1949. Meetings are held in the members' homes the 4th Tuesday of each month.

Officers elected were:
President, Mrs. A. M. Ellenburg
V. Pres., Mrs. J. P. Richardson
Secretary, Mrs. D. E. Jones
Treasurer, Mrs. C. B. Cain

SANTA MONICA SOCIETY

The Santa Monica Bay Chapter was organized on April 27, 1949 with eight charter members. The meeting was held at the home of Mrs. J. R. Hall.

Officers elected were:
President, Mrs. E. O. Sherer
V. Pres., Mrs. Wm. Haskell
Secy. & Treas., Mrs. J. R. Hall

Permanent meeting place for this club is the auditorium of the Brentwood market. Meetings are on the 1st Tuesday of each month.

On May 26th Mrs. Clarrissa Harris, Director of Region 10 was present to install the officers, and gave an interesting talk about Violets.

Season's Greetings

to

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African Violet Magazine

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MARCH 1950 VOLUME 3 NUMBER 3

THE AFRICAN VIOLET MAGAZINE

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Members:

Most undignified behavior I know . . . but when the Editor of your African Violet Magazine gets 10 or 12 notices from the postoffice saying, "Moved left no address" or "Returned for better address" et cetera each time the magazine is mailed out to you . . . she wants to scream and bellar ! ! !

Please send me your address promptly if you move, as it will save time and money. I am very worried over our lost members. Will each of you read the list and help us in our search for them? They have paid their dues and they must be sent their copies of the magazine. Will you help?

Your attention is particularly called to the first of a series of fine articles "Species and Nomenclature of the African Violet", by Harvey Cox and Evan Roberts. You will in the succeeding issues have the privilege of seeing photographs and having proper identification of the species by these saintpaulia experts. The Society is indeed much indebted to these generous members for the sharing of their knowledge and information with you.

Beginning with the June magazine, Neil and Mary Miller will have the first part of their article "Nematodes and Parathion" for you. This is good club program material and it is especially recommended to you for your serious thought.

I'm going to be loafing at the Philadelphia meeting, and I will have plenty of time to talk . . . So brush up on your promises . . . I'm looking for some good stories for future issues. — So until May 12th and 13th.

Most sincerely,

Alma Wright

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The Presidents Message

Plans for Saintpaulia Research

Very humbly, especially after the generous send-off given by our popular and beloved retiring president, does your new president assume the duties of this office. Our young but vigorous Society has made great strides under the capable leadership it has had, and I shall need the help of every one of you, my fellow members, to continue in the pace that has been attained.

I am very proud and happy to have been chosen to serve the Society and pledge my very best efforts in its behalf, as do your other officers.

In a very short span of time we have grown from a mere handful of members to more than three thousand; we have gained momentum as we went along and are growing by leaps and bounds. We have two very efficient new committees, the Registration Committee and the one on Awards — these are big steps toward accomplishing worthwhile goals.

We now have an opportunity for another worthwhile accomplishment.

Prof. Alex Laurie, whom many of you heard at the Convention last April, has made it possible for a young student at Ohio State University, under Prof. Laurie's supervision, to do post graduate research work on Saintpaulias. This work will benefit all of us who grow violets and will cover phases of interest and importance to every one. The young man who is to do this work will, from time to time, submit his findings in articles in our delightful magazine.

The cost of this project is twelve hundred dollars ($1200.00), some of which has already been subscribed by some individual members and by several of our commercial growers.

I believe you will all want a part in this and am suggesting that any local clubs which are so inclined make donations toward this worthy project. The amount is entirely up to you. No matter if it be large or small, every donation will help and it is the idea - the unity - of all of us working together that will make the results doubly gratifying.

One club I know is planning a card party and sale of small plants - the proceeds of which are to go to this fund. Mark your checks for the Research Fund and make them payable to the Society - you may send them to me or to our treasurer, Mr. Warren Gottshall.

Remember, please, that this is your Society, and your officers and staff are desirous of carrying out your wishes and will welcome your suggestions.

Sincerely,

Myrtle Radtke

SPECIES NOMENCLATURE OF THE AFRICAN VIOLET

Harvey Cox, Calif. and Evan Roberts, Mich.

S. GROTEI

Photograph by Brian Perkins

One of the reasons why there is a need for scientific names is that different common names are applied to the same kind of plant in different countries. For example, in Germany the African violet is called "Das violette Usambara".

Even in different parts of the same country a plant may have more than one common name. There are three common English names for **Saintpaulia ionantha.** "Usambara Violet", "African Violet", and "East African Violet". The name African violet may not be understood by a French Canadian who doesn't understand English.

Scientific names also are necessary to standardize and express plant knowledge so that it can be made available. These names consist of two parts -- a genus and a species. The first name always is capitalized and the second is never capitalized, according to modern agreement. Most genera and species names are from Greek or Latin. They often are descriptive of traits or places, or commemorate people.

The species is the basic unit in the classification of an organism. It is a group of individuals of the same ancestry, of similar structure and behavior, and of stability in nature. The members of a species retain their characteristic features through many generations under natural conditions. If plants from a single species are self-pollinated their offspring will be like their parents. A genus is a collection of closely-related species. The collection of species comprising the genera have certain common major characteristics but differ in minor ways.

Saintpaulia ionantha. The first species was discovered by the Imperial District Captain of Usambara, East Africa. He sent plants or seeds to his father, Mr. Saint Paul-Illaire, Lord Chamberlain, retired, of Fischbach, Silesia, Germany. The elder Saint Paul-Illaire was very interested in this plant and took examples of it to Herman Wendland, Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Herrenhausen (Hanover). Mr. Wendland described the plant in Latin and named the genus **Saintpaulia** for the Saint Paul-Illaire family. He gave

it the species name of ionantha which means, "with flowers like the violet". Other species have been discovered since. S. ionantha was first described in 1893.

The newer species are: Saintpaulia grotei, Saintpaulia orbicularis, Saintpaulia pusilla, Saintpaulia goetzeana, Saintpaulia diplotricha and Saintpaulia tongwensis "(others have been discovered but they have not been described)". All plants and animals are named this way. The different kinds of African violets existing in nature are the different species as mentioned above. A species may be further divided into varieties. Our present day varieties of African violets probably are descendants from at least two species, Saintpaulia ionantha and Saintpaulia diplotricha.

As no known records have been kept it is impossible to tell by existing varieties, if they are a hybrid between two species or variants within the species. A variety which is not known to have originated from a species should be listed by the generic name Saintpaulia, and then the word variety and the variety name. For example, Saintpaulia variety Blue Boy or Saintpaulia variety duPont Blue. For briefness the variety names need only be mentioned with the understanding they belong to the genus Saintpaulia. This type of nomenclature fits the present variety classification of the African Violet Society of America, Inc., with only minor changes. The species Saintpaulia ionantha will have to be listed by its full name (not just ionantha). Kewensis will have to be listed as Saintpaulia diplotricha (Saintpaulia Kewensis is syn. with Saintpaulia ionantha) according to Mr. B. L. Burtt of Surrey, England, who has made a botanical study of these kinds.

Probably one of the most interesting of the species of Saintpaulia is Saintpaulia grotei, Engl. (see photograph). It was first described in Latin by Professor A. Engler of Berlin in the Botanische Jarbucher, Volume 57, Pages 201-203 in 1921. Under cultivation it has become slightly larger because of more favorable environmental conditions. This is especially true when it is grown in the greenhouse or in the home and is applicable to the other species as well.

The main features that distinguish it from Saintpaulia ionantha are the presence of stems and its almost round dentate leaves. It has creeping brown stems which sometime root at the nodes. Two of these stems can be seen in the photograph. They are shown turning down over the rim of the pot; one at the left and one at the right of the picture. The medium green leaves are almost flat, being from 1-3½ inches long by 1-3½ inches wide. Sometimes small "pockets" or depressions appear between the veins. These are shown on some of the leaves in the photograph. The leaf stems grow to 10 inches in length. Flowers are blue-violet near the tips of the petals. This color shades to a darker blue-violet toward the center of the flower (B.V. 5 to B.V. 2). The flowers are produced in clusters of two, sometimes three. Seed pods are over an inch in length.

"The best native plants of this species are found in the vicinity of Amani, Tanganyika, Territory at an altitude of 3,000 feet. There they are located in dense shade near running water. However its roots are not submerged in water but have perfect drainage which is necessary for all the species".

The chromosome number of Saintpaulia grotei is 2n = 30.

The next issue will contain an article on the species Saintpaulia tongwensis.

FAILURE AND SUCCESS

Mardie Eckhardt, Md.

If you are an expert, this is not for you. But if you have tried and tried to grow African violets without success then maybe this will help.

I wanted to grow them from seed, so I pollinated some of my plants. The crosses took fine, but in 4 or 5 months the pods drooped, so I pulled them off and threw them away. I did not know that I should have dried the pod. I thought they were rotten, so I decided to buy seed.

The seed arrived with directions, which I followed, but after three weeks, no seedlings. An acquaintance said the seed was too old if it did not come up in ten days, so again I threw the mica, seed and all out.

By this time I was real cross with myself! Why couldn't I grow them if others could? I decided there must be something wrong with my method. I had some more seed of my own crosses and so decided to try again, being careful in the planting and watering. Still no luck! At last I hit upon the idea of trying them in different lights. I tried the East window, but still no good, as a tree gave too much shade. Then I tried a South window, shaded by a thin net curtain. You can imagine my surprise and delight one morning to see a little green sprout, and day by day, more and more. I had only put the glass on at night as the nights were cool, but in the hot weather it would not be needed at all.

I believe a strong light is most necessary, and heat is essential too. I put all my plantings in the same exposure, but I think a strong North light would be as good.

So if you have failed before, try again. You know the old saying, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again".

THE FIRST COMMERCIAL AFRICAN VIOLET GROWER

Evan Roberts, Mich.

Friedrich Benary of the seed-house Ernst Benary of Erfurt, Germany was the first commercial plantsman to offer the seeds of Saintpaulia to the world. Mr. Hermann Wendland, who described Saintpaulia ionantha for Hofmarschal Baron Walter von Saintpaul-Illaire, wrote that ownership rights were sold to the firm Ernst Benary in 1893. Mr. Friedrich Benary was head of the concern at the time.

Mr. Friedrich Benary foresaw the value of the African violet plant and purchased it for seed production and distribution. A red-violet flowered variety was first announced by Mr. Benary in 1898. He offered a white variety called "alba", and developed other varieties designated as "atrocoerulea", and "purpurea".

Friedrich Benary, eldest son of Ernst Benary, was born on January 4th, 1850 and died July 11th, 1917. He received his horticultural training from Louis van Houtte at Ghent, Belgium and worked in other establishments in Germany, Great Britain and France. After the war of 1871 he became partners with his father Ernst Benary who started the firm in 1843. When his father died, Friedrich went into partnership with his younger brother John. The seed-concern bred and sold the choicest flower and vegetable seeds to all countries of the world.

Under Friedrich Benary's management the business was successfully built up and became well known in the international flower-seed trade. Mr. Benary was a regular visitor to the United States and he was highly respected by his friends. He was recognized as an authority of horticulture and frequently honored by invitations to judge horticultural congresses and exhibitions.

Friedrich Benary

The son of Friedrich Benary, Mr. Ernst Benary, and a grandson now manage the firm. The present Mr. Ernst Benary is now offering a dark blue, an amaranth red and a light blue, heartshaped leaved variety to the trade.

ANNOUNCING – POPULAR GARDENING

Paul F. Frese, formerly editor of Flower Grower Magazine, C. M. Winchester, Jr., and Frank A. Hodges, Jr., announce the publishing of a new garden magazine titled "POPULAR GARDENING."

Mr. Frese will be editor, Mr. Hodges advertising manager, and Mr. Winchester will be publisher with executive offices at 24 James Street, Albany, N. Y.

The editorial and advertising offices will be at 141 East 44th Street, New York 17, N. Y.

The first issue will appear about February 20, 1950.

LET'S VISIT

Let's visit with a commercial grower this time - the Tinaris, Frank and Anne. We made the trip by automobile and strongly advise that, if possible, you do likewise. The countryside about Bethayres is beautiful and well worth a look-see. Our tour was something of an accident as it was a "time-spender". Frank and Anne were expecting us, but we thought that we should at least give them time to get some of their work out of the way before we monopolized all their time.

After a phone call, advising that we would not arrive until after lunch, we set out with a mutual friend. Our further advice is that you also do your sight-seeing before arriving at the Tinari Floral Gardens - for once you arrive there you will be unable to break away.

We were greeted like long lost friends. Of course we had known Anne personally for a long time - since the first convention in Atlanta, but had not had previously the pleasure of meeting Frank. While making our noisy greetings we backed Frank in the direction of the greenhouses. Anne was completing the wants of a customer. It is quite possible that the customer thought we had escaped from somewhere, or were at least about to "hold-up" the joint, for she caught up her box and beat a hasty retreat. We, at this time, gave a desultory glance about this entrance room where African violet supplies, insecticides, fertilizers, etc., are displayed. Some time later we further realized that this was also their "packing shed". We were too busy backing both Frank and Anne toward the first greenhouse to pay too much attention to our immediate surroundings.

If you have never been into a commercial greenhouse with benches laden with blooming plants, we know you cannot imagine the sight that confronted us. It is like a sea with waves of different colors and hues stretching to the far glass wall. You are conscious of all the color, but when you enter the Tinari greenhouses, your first impression is of the spic-and-span cleanliness of the place. The walks are freshly washed (providing additional humidity, of course); the foliage is clear and sparkling. It was such a radical change from our own living rooms where we have so many plants that we cannot get around with the dust cloth, or have time to work on our own foliage with hose or water spray. In our tour of all the houses we did not see a single discarded leaf on the floor.

The subject of "bugs" always arises when visiting a greenhouse, for no matter how particular the owner is about his own plants, there will always be visitors, with cyclamen infested plants at home, who come and paw over the stock. Optox is generally used by the Tinari Floral Gardens with frequent fumigations with cyanogas - and lately with parathion. Cyanogas, we know, is deadly and not for use except by an

expert. Parathion also gave us the shudders and Anne agreed with us.

"It always worries me when I know Frank is going to use parathion".

Frank laughingly remarked, "She always stands outside the door and wrings her hands. But it really is nothing to play with and most certainly should not be used in any greenhouse attached to your home". He then painstakingly furnished us the following information and precautions:—

"We use the Parathion Bomb for control of cyclamen mite. The complete cycle of development of mite from egg to adult takes from 6 to 8 days, going through larvae and resting stages. It should be applied and repeated until complete control is assured. The bomb is not a toy and the person who is doing the application should be cautioned. These precautions are necessary:

The operator must be completelv covered, rubber gloves, rubberized coat, hat, and approved gas mask.

The houses should be closed for at least 15 minutes before application and the fumes left in from 2 to 4 hours after application.

Temperatures of 75-90 degrees are best.

The bomb should be weighed before and after using, unless an entire bomb is used in one application.

The bomb should be warmed to 70-80 degrees before using.

The bomb should be carried upside down in a sling, since the propulsion gas (methyl chloride) is heavier than air.

The operator should walk at the rate of 100 feet per minute.

It takes about 11 minutes for an average bomb which will do 20,000 cubic feet of space.

The operator should move forward.

The applicator should be moved back and forth.

Upon completion of fumigation the operator should wear a mask while opening vents.

The fumigation can be done either during the day or night".

Another house, considered Frank's workhouse, is closed to visitors. It contains his seedlings and we certainly wish we could tell you of the originations contained therein that will before long be on our list of "must-haves". However, as the plants are still in the process of "testing", or the first round of propagation, and to keep you from drooling as we did. and the Tinaris from being plagued with requests for varieties they are still unable to supply. we can only suggest that you keep a close eye on the future catalogs of these growers.

Let us stretch a point and whisper a few introductions that we believe will be released this spring in limited quantities. First of all there will be Tinari's Mammoth Blue. This variety has extremely large foliage and flowers which are also a beautiful blue. Tinari's Amazon Blue Eyes is bound to top your list of "must-haves" for it is a "supreme" type of their famous Blue Eyes with the same lovely color in a large bloom. There is also the Double Mentor Boy which needs no description except to say that it carries the same dependable Mentor Boy foliage plus grand sized double blooms of the same reddish-purple color.

Fall of 1950 should bring forth some of their other doubles with really swell - and readily recognizable - foliage, in that they are mainly double varieties of already famous varieties. We believe that they are the first doubles that appear over truly lovely leaves. As an extra confidence, we want to tell you that the fall season will probably be ushered in with the introduction of their most beautiful seedling to date, i. e. "America". Really a "dilly" with leaves similar to the duPont types but of erect growth. It is an excellent bloomer with large cupped flowers of light blue, comparable to Blue Eyes but really huge in size. Really a marvelous companion to their Mammoth Blue. Enough said. You will have to wait for the other varieties.

We even went to inspect the "boiler room" while Anne left to see how the eldest daughter was coming along with dinner. The children (three of them) had returned from school hours ago and after dutifully paying their "respects" went about their "business". Here you realize, are three of the nicest. well-reared children you will ever have the pleasure of meeting.

This boiler room, we believe, contains three large stoves, two of coal and one auxiliary of oil. One cannot but help feel confident that the most severe of winters is well provided for.

Behind this is their "soil sterilization pit" - a concrete bin, 5 ft. wide. 15 ft. long and 7 ft. wide. The soil mixture is put into it to a depth of one foot. Every square foot is injected with Chlorpicrin and Ethylene Dibromide. Upon completion of the injections it is wetted down and covered with canvas. The operation is completed until the bin is a full 5 ft. thick. A full face mask is even worn during this procedure. The purpose of the canvas covers is to prevent the gas from escaping and also so that a layer at a time can be used. This fumigation needs but five days to accomplish its purpose, but the Tinari's usually keep on the covers for a month. A thorough airing is necessary before the soil can be used. Frank also advised that the work is best accomplished at temperatures of 70 degrees or over.

Helen Van Pelt Wilson, in her book "The African Violet", remarked that when she entered a greenhouse she had an urge

to ask the owner for a paper bag so she could gather up old leaves and blooms. We did not have this inclination at the Tinaris. Our only desire was for a small piano box - "grand" size - so we could surreptitiously purloin a plant or two that caught our fancy. Fortunately we have never fallen to theft - we beg what we want, or pay for it, if necessary.

No matter how painstaking you are, you are sure to miss many of the fine varieties. You are, on the other hand, conscious that here you find the very best and recognized varieties. Anne Tinari is very particular and most conscientious about correct nomenclature for the varieties that they do propagate.

It is rather difficult at a later date to relive a very pleasant experience, simply because there is usually so much of it that only a confusion of high-lights remain. This is our experience when trying to retell our visit. The first thing on our left, with this particular visit, was, we believe, the bench containing plants of Plum Satin and next their propagating stock of MacFarland's Blue Warrior. Both are tops in our estimation and merit the best position in our windows at home. The clean, satiny foliage of both is a joy indeed; but then perhaps you, like we, have a preference for dark foliage. Perhaps, after all, the first variety was the Tinari's own introduction - Blue Eyes. We feel that everyone has this lovely, clear blue variety so it needs no description. If you do not, then you are sure to come away from the Tinari Floral Gardens with one in your box. Their supply of Lady Geneva is among the finest anywhere.

The propagating house is another joy to behold. You are amazed at the great number of leaves that can be placed in a bench—row after neat, close-packed row, like a parade of soldiers in close formation. You also notice that each variety is separated by a single row of Ruffles leaves, because of their distinctiveness and the fact that they propagate like weeds. In here also are the newer varieties - strictly under propagation and not yet for sale, due to a very limited quantity.

One house contained a bench full of Frank's duPont Lavender- Pink seedlings, that in our opinion, were very beautiful. Some of them were as pale as West Coast Amethyst and had flat, large, round leaves. We were curious to know what would become of them. "We will probably try to dispose of them in the holiday gift trade" Frank informed us. "But why? Some of them are very beautiful and definitely much lighter than the Lavender-Pink duPont". The fact remained, in his opinion, that they were still just lavender-pinks and therefore undeserving of names. We would have been quite content to slip the entire lot into our "piano box".

Just about this time, you are faced with the proof that Saintpaulias are really of EASY culture. We did not give the spectacle a thought as we merely had the idea that the walls, beneath the glass, were made of cement block and that African violets were planted in the holes of the blocks. "Why are they planted in there?" we inquired. In reply, Frank leaned over a bench and lifted the plant up for our inspection - no pot, no soil, and merely a solid cement wall for it to rest on. "Do it again" we demanded in disbelief. The next one did not come away as it had grown fast to the cement. The third plant did. There were dozens of them and in full bloom. "How long have they been there?" we inquired, still skeptical.

Frank's "Since they were a leaf cutting", did not suffice. We demanded a further and truthful explanation.

"It is really a fact. The children frequently take up a handful of wet sphagnum moss, slap it on the ledge and stick a leaf into it".

"And that is all?"

"That is all".

"Now listen", we counter-attack. "We know that Saintpaulias are not orchids. On what do these plants live?"

"I guess the only secret is that we water all our plants with fertilizers and using a hose they naturally get some of it".

We had always been curious to know how commercial houses did fertilize all their plants and had imagined it was done by flooding the benches with the solution. Applying it with a hose was beyond our comprehension. Frank explained that their hose had a "contraption" attached that mixed the fertilizer from a separate receptacle. "But how do you keep it from getting on the foliage?" was our next question.

"We don't. We just connect the hose and water everything".

As they use Hyponex, alternated with Proliferol, we were amazed that it did not burn the foliage. We were always of the opinion that the burns on our own leaves were the result of our drippy watering can.

On the side of one wall there is another plant growing - no sphagnum this time, as there is no way to hold it there. The roots are spread out over the wall like those of wall ivy. No one knows how it got there and it is only the clinging tenacity of the roots that keep it growing there. The natural conclusion of all this is that we do not raise our own plants properly. We should "slap" a handful of sphagnum on our window-sills and stick in a leaf. (Why not baskets, or pots of sphagnum for our plants? We know that they will grow in plain vermiculite with occasional feedings - and OH JOY, no nematodes!)

Cont. bottom next page

DECORATING WITH AFRICAN VIOLETS

Lois Russell, S. C.

I like flowers so well that they are a part of my life. I need them to live with indoors as well as out. When one enters a room where violets are grown, they really speak out a welcome of good cheer that can't be missed or misunderstood.

Husbands may often complain about unsightly house plants, but they need not complain about the friendly little house guests, the African violets, because their presence is not only a source of pleasure to me, but to everyone growing them. Their colors lend beauty and charm to the dullest of rooms. They may be used in numerous decorations. A meal is brighter with the shade of African violets that fits in with the color scheme; and as a luncheon arrangement, a grouping of Saintpaulias combining an assortment of light and dark hues gives a most pleasing effect. Conversation never lags, as the subject of African violets goes on and on.

This same principle is effective in placing several pots in a stand, selecting those with complimentary shades.

What could cheer up a sick friend more than a pot of blooming violets which will be a source of pleasure for many months?

They also prove to be ideal gifts for bridge prizes. Any guest of honor should be thrilled to receive a violet, too.

Since the Saintpaulia betokens modesty and purity, what flower could be more appropriate than white violets used for Easter?

Some time ago, I saw such an exquisite arrangement done on an old fashioned glass cake stand. The small blooming plants in shades of delicate flesh, pink and soft light blues were built up in a pyramid shape and a pot of white violets was in the top of the pyramid. It looked like a tiered cake. White lace paper doilies were twisted into pretty rosettes and stuck in between pots. This was a very attractive and clever way to keep the pots from showing. Another arrangement that caught my eye was a large red satin heart, lace trimmed. Where the heart was pierced with a golden arrow a white African violet was placed in the hole in one side of the heart and a ruffle of white lace edged the pot. This was used for a Valentine decoration. It was a master piece, if ever I saw one.

For a wedding and reception, what could be prettier than white African violets used for the table decorations, along with the wedding cake? Think how the guests will rave when they make their way to the gift room and behold the picture that no artist could paint of dainty light blues, and soft shades of pink, and orchid used in the windows and on the shelves and tables where gifts are displayed. The guests will be so taken with the violets used as decorations, they will forget to look at the presents.

So you see, there is no limit to the many ways African violets may be used by a clever and artistic person.

LETS VISIT CONTINUED

Over a mountain of spaghetti at the dinner table we continued our talk of Saintpaulias, their possibilities and future, and we came to the conclusion that the surface of the development has merely been scratched. Both Frank and Anne are of the opinion that the next ten to twenty years will present variations not dreamed of at the moment. We discussed the National Society (over roast chicken with all the "trimmin's" that was provided after we had foolishly stuffed ourselves with spaghetti). We, like all the other members, had thousands of ideas and suggestions for the Society's betterment and/or advancement. Also, like all other members, we kept all these things under our separate hats and never forwarded the ideas or suggestions to the officers so that some consideration could be taken of them!

We also talked more "bugs". "If only everyone would use at least a good insecticide, or two," Anne exclaimed. "Practically everyone with a collection of violets has, at one time or another, bought an insecticide. They use it once or twice, at most, then store it away in a closet. When they do get an insect infestation they are worried sick. If only they would get in the habit of regular sprayings and realize that it is far better to use an insecticide as a preventive measure rather than as a cure". She was honestly and genuinely concerned.

Practically too late we realized that we had but ten minutes to catch the last train. Anne flew about the house emptying her vases of flowers to present to us. Frank dashed off to the greenhouses to gather up and pack our plants. The station wagon was backed out and we hopped inside while it was in motion - we think. The train whistle was blowing for the departure while we were a block from the station. Frank placed the heel of one hand on the horn button and kept it there while we woke up the town of Bethayres. The train waited but the "stinker" of a conductor charged us an extra fee simply because we had no tickets and had to pay our fare in cash.

We settled back with a sigh and the realization that the Tinaris are among the nicest people in the world and their greenhouses a beautiful dream that we simply must revisit.

"THE VISITORS"

PAUL ROCKELMANN AND THE FRINGETTE SERIES

Regina and Warren Gottshall, Va.

For years Fischer's Greenhouses, of Linwood and Atlantic City, have been well known for their thousands of azaleas and lilies, and the millions of beautiful cut flowers that decorate most of the famous hotels and many of the homes in their section of New Jersey. Recently they have become equally as popular with collectors and raisers of Saintpaulias. This latter fame resulted, mostly, because of their beautiful double blooms and their now popular My Lady Series. However, few people know that behind this beautiful setting of African violets stands a shy, modest hybridizer with a special love for our favorite houseplant. This man is Paul Rockelmann.

Several years ago, Mr. Rockelmann was presented, by a friend, with a few African violets. A mutual appreciation immediately came to life between the man and the plants. A few square feet of bench space in one of the Fischer greenhouses was purloined so Paul Rockelmann could admire his gifts while he worked among the thousands of other plants under propagation. The habit and urge of the hybridizer soon found the man "messing around" with the blooms of the gifts. Little is known of the success or failures of these first, and subsequent crosses; nor what improvements on the then known few existing varieties, found their way into discard. Fortunately a plant with double blooms was developed. The few square feet became an entire bench and work was begun in earnest on the part of Paul Rockelmann - even though considered "Paul's plaything" by the greenhouse staff in general.

The original double-flowered plant was propagated and recrossed onto plant after plant until a range of color from pale lavender, through the orchids to the purples, was developed. This work became an unintentional secret until there were several greenhouses blooming with double-flowered Saintpaulias - simply because the African violet was not considered seriously by the owner and personnel. The fact that Mr. Rockelmann is never convinced that he has achieved anything outstanding also contributed nothing to the publicity of these creations. There is still a feeling of failure in the mind of Paul Rockelmann because he has not, to date, developed a double white or pink. Nor is he satisfied that one of his productions carries multi-petaled flowers measuring one and three-quarters inches in diameter.

Paul Rockelmann

Only one of these double varieties was given a name - Double Margaret (a beautiful deep purple of nice proportions and with waved and nicely crenate margins on the leaves). Regardless of this fact, they appear on other price lists as Fischer's Masterpiece or Fischer's Creation. The others were merely designated as Double Dark Lavender Selections, Double Light Lavender Selections, and Double Light Blue Selections.

Three nice whites were also developed and named White Water Lily, Snow Queen and White Pixie; but it is the Snow Queen that is by far the loveliest of the three, and White Pixie the most unusual with its long slender leaves - the edges of which all curl downward.

Orchid Prince, Blue Moon and Fischer's Giant Red Lavender were also originated. The latter, however, is a misnomer, as lavender is never red but shows a predominence of blue - which the "Giant" certainly does not. It is a beautiful, nearly maroon, that holds its color very well on long stems over the coarse stiff foliage.

The My Lady Series needs little introduction at this late date and all of us have our own favorites among them - but, My Lady Carol has such lovely young leaves with their sharply saw-toothed edges. My Lady Sue is a large beautiful dark red-orchid while My Lady Lorraine wears a dress of light orchid. My Lady Marion waves the lightest blue banners and My Lady Frances, with good exposure, displays her's of a very dark reddish-purple. My Lady Joan is the one that carries the least "girl-like" foliage.

All of these varieties are but a mere preamble to Paul Rockelmann's newest and most beautiful creations - the "Fringette Series".

It has always been the "bugaboo" of all commercial growers of Saintpaulias that the florists have never been educated to any other varieties outside Blue Boy, Pink Beauty, White Lady and an occasional Blue Girl. Florists overlook the "Collector Market" completely and appear content with the hospital and Mother's Day trade. Predictions for the future indicate that the florists will awaken when they become acquainted with one of the outstanding virtues of the "Fringettes". Having "double" blood in them they have also inherited one of the double characteristics. They do not shed their blooms but must, rather, be pinched off when faded. This single fact makes them perfect "gift" plants because of their long "bloomability". On the other hand, hybridizers will drool over them because of the possibility of breeding this characteristic into their own resulting seedlings.

Rumor of the "fringed" blooms has been prevalent for quite some time, but they must really be seen to be actually imagined and appreciated - the written word or photographs do them little justice. One enters the greenhouses at Linwood and is enthralled by the thousands of plants in full bloom and is barely able to move from one plant to another. There is just too much to be seen and each following variety seems more lovely than its predecessor. You have forgotten the "fringed" rumor as you move from bench to bench. It is only when you become conscious of the "crick" in your neck from looking downward and raise your head for relief that you become conscious of the sight of the plants on the shelves parallel with your eyes. You cannot believe it at first. Finally it dawns upon you that the "rumor" is an actuality. The plants are large and simply laden with bloom of beautiful tints but the margins of the petals seem unbelievable. Lady Geneva has met her rivals. Fringettes are more than that for the narrow margin is not only fringed, or lacerated, but also deeply crinkled like finely ruffled crepe-paper. You no longer see the other Saintpaulias in any of the greenhouses, even though in one obscure corner there is a plant with round blooms of broadly overlapping, reddish-purple petals - the texture, or feel of which is like starched velvet. It is hoped that this variety will soon find its way to our own shelves.

You turn to Paul Rockelmann with stars in your eyes but no voice in your throat for several seconds. Finally your lips whisper "They are the most beautiful things I have ever seen". Paul blushes shyly and asks, "Do you really think they are any good?" You are introduced to the little boy in Paul Rockelmann.

Mr. Rockelmann is a slight, blonde young chap who looks like anyone's young brother of about twenty-one years of age. It is only when you understand his responsibility with Fischer's for the thousands of azaleas, lilies, etc., the "umteen" greenhouses; his zest and finesse in developing fine Saintpaulias, that the truth of his thirty-odd years is forced upon you.

You tell Paul Rockelmann that in your opinion the Fringettes are "the final development in African violets". You see the doubt and disbelief in his expression

and realize that you are wrong, that he has merely scratched the surface of the Saintpaulia future; that his doubts derive from the fact that, from his own admission, he has little knowledge of the African violet varieties existing outside the greenhouses at Linwood. Only weeks later do you realize that Paul's energies have probably been spent in mainly developing blooms - some of the varieties lack distinguishing variations of foliage. When Paul broadens the scope of his energies to combine foliage and bloom, then the finest varieties of the future will also come from his hands.

Seven distinct hues are to be had in the Fringette Series, including a very dark "blue" and a pure white. There is no true pink as yet. Perhaps you have a preference for a particular shade. Perhaps you try to decide which of the seven is your favorite: the very pale lavender (of the delicate shade of Jessie-West Coast Amethyst), of the beautiful dark lavender with its hidden lights, or the glistening white (Purity). You will finally realize that, while each is a real beauty, perfection is achieved only in the possession of the complete series.

Bloom sizes are about average with possibly the exception of the white which is slightly smaller than the other six. The size of the individual flowers is overbalanced by the fact that they are such prolific bloomers and the addition of their tenacity to "hang on" presents a pot-full of bloom at all times.

Actually the foliage is nothing radical to shout about, but it is rather pleasing, nevertheless. There is quite a similarity between the leaves of the Fringettes and those of Double Margaret, in that both are quite waved, or bent, with short even crenations. It is as though the ruffling is carried out through the entire plant.

The plants deserve very distinguishing names. It is unfortunate that they are to be released merely under the designation of a descriptive adjective and only further individualized by color. Any one could do better by them than that! The model of perfection in all our lives is, or has been, our mother. What then but to honor the Fringette Series with names like Madonna Celeste, Madonna Angelica, etc. It is rather unfortunate that the amateur hybridizer can dream up such exotic names as Painted Ballerina, Hearts Desire, etc., while the commercials give us Giant Blue and Giant Red Lavender. However, and to misquote Shakespeare, "A name! A name! What's in a name? A violet by any other name would be as beautiful".

YOUR HINT HUNTER

Phyllis Ferrall
Rt. 5, Box 551
Battle Creek, Mich.

Mrs. Winifred Clements tells us,

"Though my plants looked good last winter, I had very few blooms. After thinking the situation over carefully, I decided that possibly there could be two reasons for this difficulty. One could be insufficient light and the other low humidity.

After reading an article put out by the Sugar Research Foundation Inc., 52 Wall Street, New York 5, N. Y., I decided to try the sugar spray in an attempt to correct my light problem. Here is the method I have been following. To ¾ cup of luke warm water, add 3 level teaspoons of granulated sugar, and a few drops of a liquid soap shampoo as a spreader. Use in a small hand (mist) sprayer and spray your African violets with the solution once each week.

With this same small hand spray, I have raised the humidity in the room also. Using only clear luke warm water, I spray through the air over my plants several times a day.

A little rotation feeding has helped a great deal too. For the 1st week weak manure water, 2nd week Hyponex, and 3rd week Super Phosphate. Works well ! ! !

My reward? All large plants are in bloom or in bud, and the small ones are showing buds. So I feel I can unhesitatingly recommend the procedure I am following", says Mrs. Clements.

ACHIMENES

(ah-kim'e-neez)
(Greek, meaning to suffer from cold)

Louise F. Smouse, Tenn.

Photos by Robin

Another cousin of our African violet with which many of you are no doubt familiar without knowing it belongs to the Gesneriacae family, is the Achimenes, or "monkey-face" plant.

Bailey's Cyclopedia tells us there are about forty varieties of this herbaceous plant from tropical America, Mexico and Guatemala. However, we in the United States grow only a few of them, mostly the newer hybrids.

This variety of Achimenes has handsome dark foliage and a soft medium blue lavender blossom.

A white Achimenes with deep lavender markings at the throat.

We have grown the deep lavender, pink and white varieties. Started in Tennessee in February or March in African violet soil, the small scaley rhizomes are planted horizontally, covered to about one inch. Watered with warm water, they are moved to light shade on the porch in warm weather, where they come to bloom in early summer and continue until frost. Then they are allowed to rest in a cool dry cellar until spring again. Also, they are particularly adapted to warm house culture.

Achimenes' velvet-like leaves are opposite, serrated or toothed, often reddish beneath. The flowers are borne in the axils of the leaves. Blossoms range from pure white through lilac-veined white, light pinks and lavenders, rose and deep lavender.

When buds show, water with manure water weekly, but avoid commercial fertilizers. Do not over-water, but should your plants suffer a single drying, they may be ruined.

SOMETHING NEW

Miss Littig

We are planning on having a "Readers' Question and Answer Box" on our problems in raising African violets — a sort of little Golden Rule corner where "we help others as we'd like them to help us".

If you have a problem, write us a letter about it. We will then publish these questions, and ask our readers who have had a similar problem and solved it, to tell us of their experience. In this way, each issue will have new questions, and the answers to the inquiries published in the previous issue.

We believe this will be interesting and helpful to all of us.

Now let us have your questions.

Laura E. Littig **3016 Jefferson Ave.**

Davenport, Iowa.

THE EARHART PLANT RESEARCH LABORATORY, CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.

Clarissa Harris

The Earhart Plant Research Laboratory is the only one of its kind in the world and is a very unique series of glasshouses built in a most attractive manner. From the exterior, one would never think that this attractive modern building houses a glasshouse.

After the dedication of the Earhart Plant Laboratory, June 7, 1949, Dr. F. W. Went, Professor of Plant Pathology at California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California, extended an invitation to the public to view these glasshouses and learn something of the possibilities the Laboratory has to offer the plant world. Dr. Went gave a most instructive talk as to the structure and objectives of this Laboratory. He also explained that after the plant is placed into operation, no one will be admitted other than those doing the scientific work, for most careful care must be exercised to protect against insects and diseases. Here the plants must be given the best of care, so the exacting work may be accomplished. Here all guesswork in the growing of plants is to be eliminated.

Talking to different groups, he tried to give some information on previous findings by his department on plants. As to the African violet, he advised that here was a plant that could be kept at an even temperature for best results and that it will take a much higher night temperature than most people give it. An even temperature of not lower than 60 degrees at night and over 75 to 80 degrees during the day will produce better plants, more flowering and longer periods of bloom. (The Society is promised a report on his findings in the near future).

The building is constructed with a special floor that allows air-conditioning throughout. There are six glasshouses with natural lighting and each of these is shaded by a constant flow of water evenly distributed over the glass. The flow of water over the glass eliminates the infrared rays of the sun which cause burning, and at the same time keeps the glass cool, which is usually one of the handicaps in the use of glasshouses.

Besides these glasshouses, there are innumerable rooms artificially lighted. Fluorescent lighting tubes are installed, but in a few instances they are experimenting with incandescent bulbs. Special Climatic rooms are provided such as a Wind room, Rain rooms, Fog rooms, rooms with Gas content in the Air, Low Humidity rooms and Radio-active rooms, all governed by a central control room.

This Control Room is the office of the Superintendent, and the walls are covered with immense panels of controls for every part of the Greenhouses. The heat, humidity, temperature, etc. may be changed and controlled by the flick of a switch.

At the rear entrance is a large preparatory area where fumigation, sterilization, and spraying take place. Personnel, plants and all materials must pass through this area before entering the glasshouses proper.

In a personal interview with Dr. Went, he advised that soil will not be used, for the bacterial content could never be reproduced, that gravel, sand, vermiculite or sponge rock will be used as a growing medium, and that the plants will be fed exclusively by proper nutrient solutions. For further perfection, a large de-ionizing plant is installed for the purpose of removing all salts from the water. The air is to be sterilized and no windows opened. This is mentioned to show the extent to which the university is going to keep everything free from pests.

There are harvesting and drying rooms, as well as an elaborate photographic and research laboratory.

At the close of the interview, Dr. Went made the following remarks:

"When this laboratory is completed, we will be able to get results that will give a much better understanding of the HOW and WHY of plant growth. If you know that, a number of things are simple to work out, so we are especially after the basic principles.

We have some other possibilities. At the moment, there is a plant that contains a powerful drug and suddenly a great chemicals was developed from this plant which never had been grown before as a crop. We do not know what it needs in the way of climate and treatment. Instead of trying this plant out in many parts of the country, perhaps getting a lot of failures, we are trying this now in the Earhart Plant Research Laboratory and can tell in a very short time what the plant actually requires in treatment and plant growth.

The space here in this laboratory is quite unique and is available, as far as space allows, for work with other plants. For this service, a charge is made which makes it possible to operate the laboratory. Several organizations have already availed themselves of this service, among them the Sugar Beet Growers, the Forestry Service and the County Air Pollution Service".

Looking at the Main Entrance of the Earhart Plant Research Laboratory at California Institute of Technology.

The Rear Entrance showing one of the natural lighted glass houses with water flowing over. Also a group of containers being prepared for use in the work with the Sugar Beet. Cans sprayed with an enamel paint inside and out as a guard against metal contact.

Rear of building showing 130 feet of glass with water flowing over glass.

PHILADELPHIA YOUR CONVENTION CITY

Esther E. Schadewald,
Chairman 1950 Convention

May 12th and 13th, 1950, at the Bellevue Stratford in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is a date to be anticipated and planned for well in advance, so that your visit here may bring pleasant memories long after. Why not plan to arrive here a couple of days in advance of the Convention so that your trip may be a sort of Spring vacation? Membership in The African Violet Society of America includes an invitation to both husband and wife to attend the Convention this year, and May is the most beautiful month of the year in Philadelphia and surrounding country. The Highways and By-Ways are bedecked for spring with flowering trees and shrubs, and one cannot help but enjoy the everchanging richness and variety of "Penn's Woods".

Within walking distance of the Bellevue Stratford, one may visit Independence Hall, the home of the Liberty Bell, at 5th and Chestnut Streets. The Declaration Chamber, where the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776 is in the same building. Traveling east to 320 Chestnut Street, one finds Carpenters Hall, where the First Continental Congress met in 1774. North on Second Street two blocks is Christ Church built in 1727. It's early congregation included George and Martha Washington, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Morris and Lafayette. The home of Betsy Ross is just around the corner at 239 Arch Street. It was here that Betsy Ross made the first American flag. From the north side of City Hall one may view the shaded lanes of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway leading to the Art Museum. Other points of interest include the Academy of Natural Sciences at 19th and the Parkway, the Aquarium along the Schuylkill River above Spring Garden Street, Fels Planetarium and Franklin Institute at 20th Street and the Parkway.

Before leaving Pennsylvania on your trip home from the Convention, plan to visit a few of the inspiring points of interest listed below:

Valley Forge Park, including Washington's headquarters and the Valley Forge Memorial Church. If the season is right, the park drives will be lined with masses of flowering pink and white dogwood trees. Route 23 runs through the park.

Bowman's Hill State Wild Flower Preserve on Route 32 at Washington's Crossing. Here lies one hundred acres of woodland, where trails are marked and well planted with rare varieties of wild flowers native to the state of Pennsylvania.

Pennsbury was William Penn's summer home. It lies along the Delaware River near Tullytown which is on Route 13. A large well-planted Herb Garden adds to the beauty of this restful site. The trees are planted in avenues. William Penn lived here in 1700.

Route 611 winds through the Pocono Mountains starting at the Delaware Water Gap. Beautiful mountain country, with series of waterfalls, is a part of this trip.

A trip south on Route 1 will not be complete unless a stop is made at Longwood Gardens at Kennett Square. The grounds cover 900 acres. The main glass house covers an area of 18,000 square feet and is truly a garden under glass. The planting is beautifully arranged and thousands of flowering plants greet the visitor, the aroma of which is magnificent.

It is my earnest desire that each and every member of the African Violet Society enjoy every minute of the 1950 Convention in Philadelphia, and to this end, and with the help of my chairmen, I shall do my best to make this possible.

WHILE traveling through Rochester plan to stop and see our AFRICAN VIOLETS. We have over 50 varieties. See them in SYCO BOWL pottery, green, red, white and blue colors. Open evenings and Sunday.

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Fourth Annual Convention

May 12 and 13, 1950 — Bellevue Stratford

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Program

MAY 12, FRIDAY

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon ..... Registration of Members
Bellevue Stratford, Convention Headquarters

Mrs. R. J. Schadewald, Convention Chairman, Committee on Convention Registration, in charge.

This period from 9:00 to 12:00 Noon may be pleasantly utilized by members of the Society in the informal exchange of friendly greetings.

12:30 p.m. Luncheon Meeting ..... Rose Garden
Mr. Floyd L. Johnson, Spencerport, N. Y., Presiding

Welcome to Philadelphia ..... Mrs. R. J. Schadewald

"Facts and Fancies About Saintpaulias" ..... Dr. John G. Seeley
Professor of Floriculture, Penn. State College

3:00 p.m. Exhibit of African violets ..... North Garden
(Open to members only)

6:30 p.m. Dinner Meeting for Members and Guests .... Rose Garden
Mrs. Arthur Radtke, President, Presiding

"There's Another Side to the Saintpaulia Story" .... Mr. Paul F. Frese
Editor of Popular Gardening

Mr. Frese will be introduced by Miss Helen Van Pelt Wilson, noted author of the book, "The African Violet"

Presentation of the Gold Medal Award ..... Mrs. Z. C. Layson

MAY 13, SATURDAY

8:00 a.m. Breakfast Meeting ..... Rose Garden
Mrs. R. R. Blackburn, High Point, North Carolina, Presiding

"Stump the Experts" ..... Quizzmaster Mrs. Bess Hardy
Editor of Garden Chats Program, Station WHIO

Panel of Experts: Mr. Neil C. Miller, Mr. Boyce Edens, Mrs. Z. C. Layson, Mr. Floyd L. Johnson and Mr. William Carter.

10:30 a.m. "Show Preparation and Judging" ..... Mrs. James Carey
Chairman of Show Staging Committee

12:30 p.m. Luncheon Meeting ..... Rose Garden
Mrs. Arthur Radtke, President, Presiding

This is the Annual Business Meeting of the Membership of the Society. Officers for 1951 will be elected. The revised By-laws will be voted on. Reports from officers and Committees will be submitted and considered. All members are especially invited to attend this meeting and to take part in the proceedings. (Open to members only.)

PLANT BREEDING

Violet Berry

CAUSES OF DIFFERENCES: There is a world wide difference in nature. No two living things are exactly alike for no two are born under the same circumstances. Every living thing has its own individuality. If you are a close observer, you will find differences between any two plants, two leaves of a plant, or two blooms on a plant. This certainly can be applied to our African Violets. If no two plants are alike, then one can understand why - now and then some variation, more noticeable than common, may be named and become a new variety.

Sex is one cause of variation. Also changes in the conditions in which violets grow cause other differences. Since physical surroundings may cause them to vary - we will consider what changes in plant life could cause nature to produce new forms.

1. Changes or Variation in Food Supply: Excess food supply is the greatest cause of variation in plants. Two horticultural philosophers, Thomas Andrew Knight and Darwin (and others who have studied it), agree that all excess of food above the amount normally or habitually received is one of the main causes of differences. Every farmer and gardener knows that the richer the soil in plant food, the stronger and the more unusual his product will be. Since excess of food supply causes variation, it naturally follows that cultivated plants should be the most variable. The first change which usually comes of liberal food supply is increase in bigness - this is quite important. If a plant once greatly changes in size - variation in shape and color will soon follow.

2. Climate: Using L. H. Bailey's book "Plant Breeding" as a source of study - I find the following information regarding the effect climate may have on plant life. Climate changes the stature of plants. They become dwarfed in high latitude and altitudes. Climate changes their form. They tend to be more broad-headed, and also more prostrate, in high latitudes and altitudes. Proportionate leafiness generally increases at the same time. There is often a gain in comparative fruitfulness following transfer towards the poles. The colors of the leaves and flowers are influenced by climate, there being a general tendency, in plants of temperate regions to increase in intensity of colors as they are carried toward the poles. There is variation in variability itself. I think this same thing can be applied to the Saintpaulia. The more difficult the climate in which a plant finds itself, the more it tends to vary to meet its unfriendly environment. In the far north, many plants are so changeable that the marks used to identify the Species in other latitudes are often lost.

The farther and more freely plants are distributed, the greater the differences, because they must adapt themselves to a wider range of conditions. Plant organism is plastic by nature and quickly responds to every touch of environment. The appearing of any one marked variation, therefore, is evidence that the plant has found a new condition. Even the simple change of seed from one locality to another generally gives a larger or better product or even more marked variation. The change is beneficial because it fits together plant characters and environments which are not in balance with each other. A plant which is grown for several years in one set of conditions becomes fitted into them, and is in a comparative state of rest - then it or its progeny is taken to other conditions, all the adjustments are broken up, and in fitting into new environment, new or strange characters are likely to appear.

Time and again, some person may introduce what he considers to be a distinct and new variety, only to find that other culturists dispute him and declare that it is only some old variety renamed. Isn't this the case of our Violets in a nutshell? And yet this person knows that he has not renamed an old variety, but that he has raised a form which appeared upon his own window-sill. So, it is apparent that, when we divide a plant into many parts and distribute it far and wide, there is possibility of variation.

The steps whereby a new species comes into existence are called mutations. Nature starts the work, man may complete it.

HOME MADE HYBRIDS: (As a reference on this subject, I suggest "Plant Breeding" by L. H. Bailey and "Partners of Nature" by Burbank).

Crossing is good for the Species, because it constantly revitalizes offspring with the strongest characters of the parents and also brings out new combinations. The further discussion of the subject deals with the extent to which crossing is possible and advisable.

If crossing is good for plant life, it is necessary to find out to what extent it can be carried. Does the good increase as the cross becomes more violent, or in other words, as the parents are more and more unlike? Or is there a limit beyond which it is not worth our time to go, or even possible?

We find that distinct species, as a rule, refuse to cross. Why is this? The main cause is the refusal of a plant to allow its ovules to be impregnated by the pollen of another plant. The pollen will not "take". Or the refusal may arise from the sterility of the cross. Again the cross may "take" and seeds be formed - and the seeds grow, but the plants which they produce may be wholly barren, sometimes even refusing to produce flowers, as well as seeds. The best results of crossing are obtained, as a rule, when the cross is made between different plants of the same variety or at farthest, between different individuals of the same species. In plain words, crosses between species are not often useful in

nature, and the more unlike the species the less useful will be the hybrids. Yet this is counter to Burbank's opinion. He was all for experimenting. For instance, "color" - he thought that all shades of colors could be produced in our flowers if the work is gone at systematically and persisted in long enough. Can we apply that theory to the elusive yellow in the Saintpaulia? Burbank said you can hardly fail to accomplish something. You are sure to be amazed at the assortment of blooms that appear on the offspring of your crossing. All that the plant-breeder can do is upset the heredity of his plants, bringing new strains and influences into the life stream. After that, Nature will carry on, and so the next step for the experimentalist is to select from Nature's offerings the ones that seem to him to go in the general direction he wants them to go. But amazing combinations many times appear. The plants seem to be so upset by the crossing that they scarcely know what they are about.

What plants are best fitted to survive? Those which are most vigorous or most productive, or most hardy, or which have well marked character, or characteristics which distinguish them in strength from their fellows - these are the ones which we often desire to obtain. We constantly covet a new character, which will lead to a new and outstanding variety. The most important reason for a cross should be to infuse new strength or power into the offspring, to improve a plant rather than to create a new one. If a new one is created, it comes gradually, an inferior quality into a good one, a good one into a superlative one. So Nature employs a slow or gradual improvement one step leading to another, and not in a sudden creation of new forms. We must dispel the charm which hangs about the whole thing - there is no magic wand to be passed over the forces of Nature. Crossing of varieties goes on at all times all over the world, and new varieties are constantly appearing. Nature has an infinity of time, she is in no hurry. We humans are interested in producing plants more to our liking, and we are definitely in a hustle. So we use Nature's methods, but try to speed them up and direct them toward an entirely different end.

Presently, in our search, we will awaken to the fact that plants do not cross with totally unlike ones, - the rose does not cross with the violet, nor the peach tree with a pecan tree. Nature, however, simply delights in breaking rules that men make and try to pass off on the world as natural laws. The only living science of plants is the science of breeding and encouraging them to become more to our liking - and let the rules take care of themselves.

Self-fertilization tends to weaken the offspring; crossing between different plants of the same variety gives stronger and more productive progeny than comes from self-fertilization. Crosses between varieties grown in different places or under different conditions give better progeny than crossing between different plants grown in the same place or under similar conditions. Choose for parents plants with great strength and virility.

Nature abhors self-fertilization. Also, Nature is opposed to hybrids (and by hybrids, we mean the crossing of plants of different species). Because of great differences between parents, pronounced hybrid offspring are unstable. Hybridizing is a game of chance that is played by Man and Nature.

Decide on the ideal of the desired variety before any attempt is made at plant breeding. In order to make any progress in securing something new, one must be a good judge of the capabilities and merits of the plants with which he is working; otherwise he may attempt the impossible or else obtain a variety which has no value. It is also important to remember the fact that a variety which is simply as good as any other, is not worth introducing. It should be better in some particular than any other in existence. I think this one fact should be kept in the minds of all the violet culturists when introducing "something new".

Here are a few facts that may help us in all our Plant Breeding. Lessened vigor, as long as the plant continues to be healthy, nearly always results in some increase of fruitfulness. It is an old Horticultural maxim that checking growth induces fruitfulness. The gardener knows that, if he keeps his plants vigorous by constantly potting them into larger containers, he will get little, or at most, very late, bloom. The plant-breeder, therefore, may be able to induce the first blooms by applying this fact. A decrease in nutrition during the period of growth of a plant favors the development of the flowering parts at the expense of the vegetative parts.

And we should remember that, even though our knowledge of plant breeding may be very limited, we can console ourselves with the fact that there seems to be no limit to the achievements, if we will just be infinitely patient and painstaking. Only the surface of this field has been scratched, so far, in this new and fascinating occupation.

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STATEMENT OF PLANT PATENT ACT INTENT AND PATENT PROCEDURES

By J. C. Robb, Jr.

(Printed August 28, 1947. In Florist Review. Permission was granted to reprint.)

(This article is from a paper, "The Plant Patent Law" prepared by H. C. Robb, Jr. secretary of the National Association of Plant Patent Owners.)

Before 1930 no protection was given to the discoverer or developer of a new variety of plant life. In spite of this fact, there were many plant breeders who devoted all their lives to production in horticulture which greatly benefited mankind. One outstanding example, so well known to most of the public, is Luther Burbank. In the words of this eminent horticulturist, "A man can patent a mousetrap or copyright a nasty song, but if he gives to the world a new fruit, he will be fortunate if he is rewarded by so much as having his name connected with the results."

Mr. Burbank succeeded in carrying on his experiments only through remuneration for his writings and the sale of the use of his name. He failed to live to see the step taken in 1930 to protect originators and discoverers of new varieties of plants. In that year Congress saw fit to "remove the existing discrimination between plant developers and industrial inventors" by enacting what is known as the plant patent act.

Prior to this act, about the only way the originator of a new plant variety could realize from his work was to build up stock guardedly and then sell the first plants at as high a price as he could obtain. Each year thereafter, as distribution increased, he witnessed a loss of control and smaller and smaller returns.

Not a Monopoly

One must not get the idea that the purpose of patent rights is to make fortunes for individuals by creating monopolies. A patent is not a monopoly in the strict sense of the word, because monopolies take away from the public something it already has, whereas a patent gives to the public something new and beneficial which it did not have before and which it may enjoy after the expiration of the patent. The patentee is given the exclusive control of his discovery for a period of seventeen years.

The fundamental purpose of the plant patent act, which is the same purpose as the general law of patents, is expressed in the Constitution of the United States, namely "to promote the progress of science and the useful arts," and, in the case of plant patents, to stimulate plant development and the investment of capital in plant breeding. Mr. Burbank further said that "the surface of plant experimentation has thus far been only scratched," and only time will show to what extent this is true.

When the patent statutes were amended by Congress by the act of May 29, 1930 (46 statutes at Large 376), a fifth class of inventions capable of being patented was established. By this act, any person who has invented or discovered and asexually reproduced any distinct and new variety of plant, other than a tuber-propagated plant, may, upon compliance with certain requirements and rules, obtain a patent therefor. (See R. S. 4886, U.S.C. Title 35, Section 31).

At the outstart emphasis must be laid on the fact that until the distinct and new plant has been asexually reproduced no application for patent should be filed, and also on the further fact that it is the plant and not its flower, its fruit, or other products thereof, which is the basis of the patent grant.

Patentable Varieties

Now what new varieties are intended to be protected by patent? These fall into three classes: Sports, mutants and hybrids. All of them may be reproduced asexually, and they must be so reproduced as to determine the permanency of their novel characteristics, before the originator, or discoverer, is entitled to apply for a patent. The variety, moreover, must be distinct, and such distinctness may be evidenced by such characteristics as color and form, habits of growth, immunity from disease and resistance to cold, drought, heat, wind and soil conditions; productivity; season of ripening; flavor of fruit; storage qualities, perfume, etc. In the application for patent the characteristics of the plant must be stated clearly and completely in order that they may be relied upon to determine identity in any alleged infringement of patent rights occurring after the patent is granted.

No one is entitled to reproduce asexually a patented plant without the permission of the patent owner, any more than one would be allowed to copy a patented washing machine, radio, or other chemical, electrical or mechanical invention. Such asexual reproduction would constitute an infringement of the patent rights, irrespective of whether it is a single reproduction or multiple one or whether it is for one's own use or for that of another. To reproduce a patented plant it is necessary to procure a license from the patent owner, just as is true in the manufacture, use or sale of any other class of patented invention enumerated in the patent statutes. In other words, there is no difference as to the infringement of plant patents and other patents, because the plant patent law is part of the general law of patents and purposely so. Manufac-

ture or use or sale or any combination of these things, may constitute patent infringement, since a patent gives the patentee the exclusive rights to make, use and sell the invention or discovery covered by the patent.

Penalties

If the foregoing is clearly understood, then it will be equally obvious that the same penalties for infringement of patents in general apply equally to plant patents. No extended discussion of these penalties is needed for the purpose of this brief article, but it may be noted that where a court finds that infringement of a patent exists it may grant an injunction on such terms as the court may deem reasonable; it may decree that the complainant is entitled to recover general damages which shall be due compensation for making, using or selling the invention, and not less than a reasonable royalty therefor, and it may also assess such costs as may be fixed by the court and, in the discretion of the court, allow an award of reasonable attorneys' fees to the prevailing party.

These penalties should not be lightly considered. It behooves everyone to respect plant patents the same as other patents.

Variable Patent Costs

The cost of obtaining a patent cannot be treated in this article, because costs are subject to variation, depending on circumstances and legal charges. The cost will also vary according to the type of the illustration required for the patent application. It will also depend on whether color of plant, leaves, flowers, fruit, stems, etc., is a feature on which the patent is to be predicated. The question of cost is a matter to be determined between attorney and client, but it can be said that the costs are commensurate with those involved in other patent matters and are usually relatively small in comparision with the benefits derived from the patent and the exclusive rights created for a period of seventeen years, which constitutes the term of all patents.

The plant patent act has now been in effect for nearly seventeen years, and there have been relatively few flagrant infringements necessitating litigation. This situation shows a desire on the part of patent owners to respect each other's rights and to exploit their own discoveries rather than to usurp what does not rightfully belong to them. There have, of course, been violations of plant patents resulting largely from lack of knowledge on the part of the infringers as to the rights given to the patent owner under the patent. While ignorance of the law is not a valid excuse, most of such infringements have been amicably settled out of court and may be taken as experience gained in this new field of patent law. This field is indeed a fertile one, and all who are interested in any way in the development and protection of new varieties of plants should give particular attention and study to the rights and privileges that are afforded by plant patents.

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HAVING DOUBLE TROUBLE?

Florence T. Foltz, Pa.

The African Violet Society of America seems to be a combination of Pen Pals, Lonely Hearts, and Information Please. One does not belong very long before he is writing letters by the score, and with all that correspondence "Lonely Hearts" automatically gets a new lease on life. If you have a problem which the Society is unable to solve, there just isn't any solution for it!

Let us consider the case of mythical "Mary Jones". Mary joined the African Violet Society and immediately sent an S.O.S. to the president (Alma, not Harry). Mary was having trouble with her Double Duchess; it was loaded with buds, but they would not open. What should she do about it? Being not only National President, but also Magazine Editor, Wife, Mother, and African violet hybridizer (and not twins) she called on a willing but inexperienced correspondent, stated the problem and suggested that the writer contact several growers and ask them, "What's wrong with Doubles?"

Most of the letters were sent out at the beginning of December and even though it was a busy season, the response was very gratifying.

Miss Fay Wilcox of Friendly Gardens, New Bedford, Pa., replied, "My Double Duchess plants have always had exactly the same treatment as my other plants, have been good bloomers and never refused to open their buds. When it gets a little Hyponex and good light it responds just like any other African violet, -- more and larger blooms. I have had the Double Orchid for several months and so far it seems to respond just like the Duchess does."

Mrs. Frank Parker, Knoxville, Tennessee, is not sure her opinions will be of very much help because she has never had any "Double Trouble" either, but she writes, "I do believe that some stock of the double purple is better than others. My plants have all been grown from a Double Russian sent to me by Louise Haffner of Michigan. All have opened and bloomed beautifully. I do know that there is one strain of Double Blue Boy which hardly ever opens, so I would say first, try to obtain good stock. Beyond that I am only guessing, but I believe increased humidity would help. To get better humidity I often set the pot, in which the violet is planted, down in a jardiniere or bowl. I pour very hot, steaming water into the jardiniere to water the plant from the bottom, and let the steam come up all around the plant. This will often stimulate bloom, so perhaps it might help the doubles to open. I also think that good strong light, perhaps even a little extra sun, and proper feeding, all of which are essential to healthy blooming violets, would help the doubles".

Mrs. Genevieve Gray, of Russward Saintpaulias Growers, Jonesboro, Arkansas, was very glad to learn that inquiry was being made into this subject under the auspices of the Violet Society. She added, "It has been our feeling for quite awhile that the double varieties were being neglected because this particular trouble was not adequately explained. Not that I can explain it. Several weeks ago we wrote to several of the larger firms asking about this same trouble. Ulery Greenhouses of Springfield, Ohio, suggested that more fertilizer be given to the double varieties, particularly during the summer months. We immediately went to work on this suggestion, and today our doubles are much improved. But whether this is due to the cooler weather or to the increased fertilizing, we do not know."

Mrs. Ruth Yoars, Bunker Hill, Indiana, has not had any personal trouble with doubles, but cites some interesting observations. #1 "A lady from Chicago has had a plant for three years. It is very large, has always been perfectly healthy, buds profusely then the stems dry up and buds fall. A new plant, started from a leaf of the old one has been in full bloom for a year; the blossoms are large with many petals and open fully." #2 "A lady bought a blooming plant at a large greenhouse. When these flowers faded it never bloomed again. It would bud profusely, but never opened. As time passed it gradually failed and finally she found it infested with a white worm 1/8" long and looking somewhat like a maggot. This had eaten out the heart of the plant, inside up from the roots. A number of people have reported this small worm in the roots and body of the plant. This trouble seems to be reported where chlorinated water is used".

An interesting note from Anne Tinari reads, "We notice two distinct things that differ in their culture from single types. They require more water and more food. We recommend also, taking out bud stalks that come out only partially. They are unsightly, when they do not open fully. By taking these off strength is thrown back to the crown of the plant, which usually helps to strengthen the plant in general and the next blossoms are usually larger and better developed."

There undoubtedly are folks like me, who, when a plant isn't too pretty, either stick it on the top shelf, or in some other inconspicuous spot and hope that some magic power will transform it overnight

Cont. on page 41

OUR BASHFUL BEAUTIES

Margaret Doell, N. Y.

I would like to tell about a little experiment I recently completed on the heavy foliage type of African violets. This information will be of little interest to those of you who are using greenhouses for propagation, as it is strictly a home problem. I am assuming that most of you have felt as I have in the past, a bit impatient with our "king-size" violets that were so slow to flower, so I decided to try to inspire bloom by employing very drastic measures.

My idea was to subject several of the "supreme" types to as much sun as possible, cast all discretion to the winds, and see what happened. Before I mention the varieties involved, may I explain that I am aware of the confusion in the terminology when reference is made to the Supremes and Amazons. Therefore, please bear with me, as I am using the correct titles to the best of my knowledge, but some of you may be calling your plants of the same variety by a different name. There is no help for this at present. So, my plants used in this plan were: Amethyst, Norseman, Blue, Red and Sailor Boy (Amazons), Red Head, Blue Girl, Blushing Maiden, Double Duchess and Pink Beauty (Supremes), du Pont Blue, Red and Lavender Pink, and Mrs. Boles. They were twelve to fourteen months old when, early in March, I placed them in South windows (with storm sash) and arranged them as close to the light as leafage would allow. Then they were allowed to absorb direct sunlight all day, every day for three months. I had prepared myself for the worst but, surprisingly enough, the results were more than gratifying. For one thing, I was resigned to seeing them all bleach horribly, but this was the case in only some instances. The others came out of the ordeal with beautifully deepened foliage. Perhaps we may have to revise some of our ideas with regard to sun exposure for our African violets. Suffice it to say, the net results were attractive.

True, the sun had taken its heavy toll, but only in the cases of specimens crowned with dull, hairy-type foliage. The varieties carrying a glossy leaf suffered little or no damage and some were improved. On the blossom side all was "sweetness and lite" for every plant carried a normal quota of buds and bloom for its type. As you can readily imagine, Amethyst Amazon far outshone the rest for quantity of bloom, with Norseman a close second, and Sailor Boy a proud third. The foliage on all three was exceptionally fine as well. The others showing little or no leaf fade followed in tnis order: du Pont Red, Mrs. Boles, du Pont Blue, du Pont Lavender Pink and Red Head Supreme. On the other hand, the plants most drastically affected by bleaching were in this order: Pink Beauty Supreme, Blushing Maiden Supreme, Red Amazon, Blue Girl Supreme, Double Duchess Supreme and Blue Amazon.

Finally, it is a source of wonderment to me now, how I found the temerity to subject these "bashful beauties" to this rigorous treatment. Obviously much work is bound to be done in this field, and to be remembered is the fact that this was only one trial, in one place, and under one set of conditions. Naturally no accurate data has been established, but rather it is merely a step, in the right direction, toward solving the performance problem involved in this case.

GROWING SAINTPAULIAS IN CALIFORNIA

Ethel Thalheimer

Each section of our wonderful United States varies considerably. In our vicinity (Southern California) we have a rainy season and a dry season; our humidity and water must be considered. The rainy season comes in the winter when we need heat and this lowers our humidity, so I suggest that pans of water be set on the floor furnaces. Our humidity is always low, therefore our soil must be porous for air, yet must hold moisture. Some City water contains chlorine; if not too high a percentage, it will correct itself, if let stand 24 hours before using.

My friend, Veryl Maxham, and I have been 'putting and taking' in our growing medium for some time and at last we are satisfied; our Saintpaulias are growing like little fighters, with beautiful foliage. Plantlets divided and potted in this mixture have been coming into bloom in six weeks in our homes, in East windows with curtains to filter the light.

3 Pints Garden Soil
3 Pints Oakleaf Mold
1 Pint Redwood Leaf Mold
1 Pint Steer Fertilizer
1 Pint Soilite or Sharp Sand
1 Cup Bonemeal

To sterilize, sprinkle with water until moist, bake in oven at 225° for 1 hour. Stir several times, and be sure to keep it moist or it will destroy the growing elements.

I sterilize the pots, then dip the top edges in hot paraffin to protect the petioles from the moisture and chemicals.

No matter how much work and time is taken in sterilizing to prevent pests and disease, it is well worth while, and too much cannot be said on this subject. Saintpaulias are easy to grow and keep healthy, if a person is systematic and careful to isolate for one month all new plants.

MILE HIGH HOBBY

Annette Scully

Raising African violets at altitudes of 5,000 feet or over (here at Laramie, Wyoming, the altitude is 7211 feet), is not an easy matter. We have many problems to contend with, but we try to overcome these problems and to give the violets, as nearly as possible, the same growing conditions they were accustomed to in their native haunts. Some of our problems are as follows: low humidity, coupled with drying winds, constant variation in temperature which changes several times in one hour, long, cold winters, and extremely intense light during the summer.

Due to the intensity of the sun at this altitude during the summer months, we have to watch our plants for sun scalding. In east windows, even in the early morning, plants must be protected with thin glass curtains or sheets of wax paper between the plants and the window pane. I use the clear transparent plastic curtains instead. It lets in the diffused light and warmth, but breaks the hot, burning rays of the sun. Throughout June, July, and August, I have to use double sets of glass curtains in west windows. In the morning before the sun shifts around to the west windows, I pull the curtains back to give them all the light they need. Clear plastic table cloths in small sizes can be used to cover the plants during the hottest part of the day, eliminating the use of double sets of curtains and having to remember to pull down the shades. Heavy sheets of wax paper similar to that used at meat markets will serve the same purpose. I have had plants sun scalded in the month of May through one pair of glass curtains. Another good idea, if you own your own home, is to buy sheets of Dupont Cel-O-Glass and tack it on the outside of your windows. It also serves as a substitute storm window in the winter, thereby allowing you to keep your plants closer to the window pane without their getting chilled. With the Cel-O-Glass your worries of sun scalding would be over, yet strong light would be admitted through this transparent material. By providing this extra shading, we are able to have foliage of a heavy dark green color.

We also have the drying winds, which cause the plants to dry out quickly, especially in the hot months, when the windows are open. This necessitates a daily inspection of the plants to see if they need watering.

The relative humidity at Laramie is as follows -- 7 A.M., 55%, Noon, 25 to 50%, 7 to 8 P.M., 75%. In spite of the dry atmosphere, our cool summer nights are a great help, replacing, to some extent, the moisture loss by evaporation from the foliage during the day.

To promote more humidity in the house in the winter months when the doors and windows are closed and gas heat is on,

I grow Ivies in large vases of water along with my violets. I also put tall fruit cans full of water inside of each wall register in the corner, where they cannot be seen, and I keep them filled as the water evaporates. I also keep the furnace water container full daily.

Our soil here is another problem. I called the Agricultural Department of The University of Wyoming for the P.H. on soil, that I had obtained in a canyon nearby. I was informed that the P.H. on the soil at one end of the canyon was 8: at the other end, the P.H. was 6: and that Wyoming has 200 or more types, colors, textures, and series of soils.

Most irrigated soil in Wyoming is a brown or light grayish brown loam or a fine sandy loam, but there are sands and clays, and black, red, gray, and brown soils too. I found that these types of soils pack and bake like cement when watered, if no other moisture holding ingredients are added. Therefore, the addition of sand, peat moss, leaf mold, and natural fertilizers like well-rotted sheep or cow manure is essential to make up a good soil mixture.

In propagating leaves, I always try to root them in wide mouth jars, so I can keep a clear plastic refrigerator bowl cover over the top of the jar until they are well rooted, and small plants appear. Without this protection from the extreme dryness of the air, the leaf, wilting from the top down, will collapse just before or soon after the small plants appear. From a reliable source came the information that high nitrate levels in the soil, whether from a natural condition, or chemical fertilizers, can cause the leaf stem to die. With the lack of moisture in the air, leaves take more time to root and plants grow more slowly, but when they have reached the age of maturity, they are husky looking and growing more flat than upright. There is no spindly growth out here.

We do not have many commercial violet growers in this part of the country. This makes it difficult for a collector to add the newest varieties to his or her collection. However, the National African Violet Society, especially the Round Robin and Homing Pigeon Department, has been a great help. By joining several of these Robins and Pigeons, you make contacts with other amateur growers, and find out what varieties they have in their collection. Then you can exchange via air mail and parcel post (Special Delivery). This enables you to get new varieties even before they are for sale by commercial growers. The magazine gives us much worth while information from amateur growers in different parts of the country. I find the information of their methods of propagating, soil mixtures, insect and disease control, etc., very helpful.

Cont. on page 29

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED BY THE TRIAL AND ERROR METHOD IN GROWING AFRICAN VIOLETS

My Do's and Don't's

Edith Mackey, Calif.

Full sunlight gives you lovely blooms, but poor foliage. Weak light gives you good foliage, and very little bloom. Adjust the light according to your own particular conditions. Plenty of fresh air is essential, but no drafts.

My greatest mistake is oversized potting. Start with your smallest pots, gradually increasing until they are in 4 inch pots for single crown plants. Shallow fern pots are ideal. Single crown plants showing a center rosette are lovelier than multiple crown plants. They also show off flowers to better advantage.

Soil Mixture should be porous, rich in humus and quick draining. If not you are apt to get crown rot. When watering, place pots in deep water, soak them thoroughly at each watering, and water only when top soil is dry to the touch.

My soil recipe: ⅓ soil (my soil is a black soil which contains peat and some sand), ⅓ leaf mold (I use it as it comes from the sack), ⅓ sand and a small amount of bonemeal, charcoal, and a little vermiculite or peat.

Spray foliage with warm water at least twice a month. Never use cold water on the leaves of your violets or the leaves will spot. Always use room temperature water for watering or spraying foliage and keep out of the sun or strong light till dry. Spray in early morning and if plants are not thoroughly dry by noon blot off surplus water with blotting paper. When fertilizing do not get fertilizer on the foliage or center of crown . . . neither sodium selenate, if using it. Fertilize at edge if not using saucer method. I prefer an acid fertilizer such as Liquid Grow. I occasionally use Hyponex and Vitamin B-1.

Keep larger plants from touching each other; this prevents the transfer of pests from one plant to another if one should become infested before you notice it. Small plants seem to like being crowded. I have learned this since keeping my small plants in pots in chicken feeders. I find them easier to water and carry about if I wish to. Also the small amount of water remaining after watering creates a humidity that they enjoy very much.

I have just found out to my delight I can grow African Violets in pots without drainage. Try growing them in sniffer glasses or large fish bowls, or in your precious china cup with saucer, and set them on your coffee table or about your room. They are lovely displayed this way.

A VISIT WITH FAY WILCOX

Emily M. Hodan, O.

Wouldn't you like to take an afternoon drive and visit a lady famous in African violet circles? We are referring to Fay Wilcox of Friendly Gardens, who is known far and wide as a specialist in African violet seed.

Just on the outskirts of the small town of New Bedford, Pennsylvania, sits a trim white house atop a little knoll overlooking the highway. Before we can drive up the short winding road to the front door, out steps Fay to welcome us. And of course Melvin Greggs, her cousin, will also be on hand to say "hello". Then there is Tucker, or "Tuck", for short, who rushes up with a joyous bark to let us know he's part of the welcoming committee, too. And into the house we go, where Matilda and Miranda, the pussy cats, sit contentedly and wait expectantly for a friendly pat.

Did we say "contentedly"? Not always, for there is a new kitten as yet unnamed, who has entered the family circle and certainly keeps things humming. He had us in stitches watching his antics, climbing in and up on the bookcase, peering out from behind the books, then like a flash, jumping down in a power dive on the back of Matilda, his foster mother. Next moment he was scurrying along the window sill and horror of horrors, getting all tangled up in the curtains. Then he whisked out of sight and next thing we knew, he was trying to climb up on a dining room chair. Never a dull moment in the house with him!

Just then we looked out the window and saw another car pulling into the drive, so Fay said to us, "Go ahead and look at the violets while I go see who it is." We didn't need a second invitation and stepped out into the sunporch. Violets here, there, and everywhere we look - rows and rows of lovely saintpaulias in rainbow hues. There are propagating trays galore for cherished varieties, set on shelves above the plants, where cuttings are started in vermiculite.

But we are anxious to see the greenhouse proper, so off we go to the long Orlyt house that Melvin built.

Well, the sight that greets us as we enter just about leaves us breathless - violets, violets and more violets, in bud, in bloom, and most exciting of all, plants with maturing seed pods. So many seed pods on the plants, fat, full pods, a promise of new seedlings for the African violet fan! Fay said she has had as many as fifty to sixty seed pods on one plant at a time.

Of course we want to know just when Fay really became interested in African violet seeds. "Oh", she said, "it must be going on five years now. I started by pollinating one plant for fun to see if the cross would take, and it did, so I decided I must have beginner's luck. But it was so fascinating that I gradually expanded in this field and discontinued shipping plants, to devote all my time to this phase of African violet culture. There is always the possibility that the seed may produce some unusual and outstanding seedling."

"I've had orders for seed from faraway places, from Turkey, Singapore, New Zealand, Guatemala, Hawaii, England, Greece, Germany, Alaska, even from East Africa. I have sent seed to an interested fan who lives in almost the exact location in East Africa where the original plants were discovered by Baron Walter Von Saint Paul."

"I have found" she went on, "that spring pollination seems to cause seed to mature more quickly than fall pollination. It will take from six to nine months for seed to mature".

"And just how do you make your crosses?" we asked. "Well", she replied, "there are different methods used by different people, but I like to use a pair of tiny scissors and snip away a small portion of the anthers of one blossom and let the pollen fall on my thumb nail. Then I

apply the pollen grains from my nail on to the stigma of another blossom, using seed parents of different varieties . Or if you don't want to use the thumb nail procedure, you can insert the pistil of one flower, into the tiny opening cut in the anthers of another flower, but be sure the stigma is sticky so that the pollen will adhere. In this way the pistil will come directly into contact with the fresh pollen and the stigma of the pistil will show the yellow pollen grains. If a cross takes, the seed pod will form shortly and then a period of waiting follows until the seed is ripe. It is a good idea to run plants while seed is maturing a little on the dry side. Also be sure you do not crowd your plants at this time as they need good air circulation round about them.

I have noticed the different shapes and sizes of seed pods, the du Ponts especially forming very large seed pods, but eventually at maturity they seem to become more or less standard in size. When the seed pods are fully mature, they will appear shrunken and dry. Remove them from the plant and let them dry another month or so as this seems to add to their vitality. Then open the pods, remove the seeds carefully and store in a glass jar until time to plant.

Be sure your soil is sterilized to prevent fungus growth. Again there may be a very slight variation in the preparation of the potting mixture. We use a 4 inch pot with plenty of crocking in the bottom for good drainage, then fill up with a mixture of light, sandy soil, vermiculite and peat moss, no fertilizer. Firm the soil, set the pot in water and let it soak up until well moistened, then sprinkle the fine seed on the surface, place a piece of glass over the top and keep in a warm, light place. Water from below to keep the soil uniformly damp but never too wet, for then the seed will rot. If moisture should collect on the glass, remove the top, wipe dry and replace. Germination will take place in perhaps fourteen days and will continue on into possibly several months.

When your tiny seedlings reach the third or fourth leaf stage and are barely large enough to handle, they may be lifted out with a toothpick or a very thin knife blade and transplanted either to flats or directly into the small two inch pots, using the same soil mix as before. Another shift will be necessary later as the plantlets become crowded. Depending on varieties and different growing locations, first blooms may appear anywhere after six months.

I've made crosses of du Pont Lavender Pink on Blue Chard and Ruffles, hoping for larger and perhaps orchid blossoms with either Blue Chard or Ruffles foliage. I've also pollinated Pink Beauty, White Lady, Sky Blue and Blushing Maiden on Blue Girl, hoping to get a Girl seedling with the typical Blue Girl foliage and a light shade of blossom. And I've crossed White Lady and Sky Blue in hopes of getting a white with better foliage. Time will tell if the seed produces something outstanding".

Well, it was now getting late and we had a long drive ahead of us so regretfully we bade Fay and Melvin goodbye and started for home.

But our parting thought was this: No wonder this place is called "Friendly Gardens" - truly an appropriate name for friendly folks.

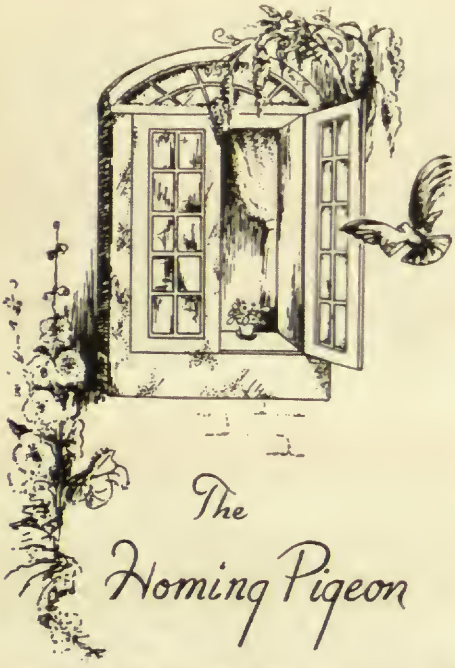
MILE HIGH HOBBY

Cont. from page 27

The shipping of leaves and plants is risky from Sept. 30th to May 31st out here. I have received them later than these dates, but I always keep my fingers crossed until the package is received and opened. Snow storms and freezing weather are not unusual at the first of June and even later.

Some, or all of the problems found in this region, may prevail in other parts of the country; yet with all these obstacles that confront us at high altitudes, I receive more pleasure from raising African violets than any other house plants, because they can be raised inside the home the year round, regardless of weather conditions.

When the snows come, covering the ground, when the leaves wither and drop from the trees, and the skies take on a cold grey color, my home is brightened by the dark green foliage and lovely blossoms of my violets. It seems as if I have taken a part of summer into my home. When I see them growing and blooming profusely, I am more than repaid for the efforts I have put into raising them.



(By action of the Board of Directors, new members joining the Homing Pigeon after July 31, 1949, must be members of the National Society.)

GLADYS CANNER

Homing Pigeon

Membership Manager

With this issue we are introducing to you two very active Homing Pigeonites who will conduct the program work of the Homing Pigeon Department for this year.

It is my pleasure to present to you Gladys (Mrs. Daniel A.) Canner, Route 1, Creek Road, Herkimer, New York, who is in charge of applications for membership in all pigeon units. If you wish to join a group, or if you wish to withdraw from one, please communicate with Mrs. Canner at the above address. As your Homing Pigeon Membership Manager she will be most willing to assist you in any way she can.

VIOLET BERRY

Homing Pigeon

News Editor

A hearty welcome is extended to Violet (Mrs. Thomas) Berry, 710 East 6th Street, Mount Vernon, Indiana, who as your Pigeon News Editor will gather the information for this page. News from Pigeon Directors, as well as from the Pigeon letters themselves, will enlarge the scope of Pigeon contributions.

Dear Pigeon Members:

HELP! HELP! HELP!

Let's make our Column of the Magazine one of the best! Without your help - it will be a big FLOP! May I count on all of you to HELP?

This column is to be made up of all helpful suggestions and hints that you members write in your Pigeon Units. If your suggestions are good and would be of interest to the Society to publish, I am to copy them with your name attached. You watch the column then to see your name in print. I think we will also publish any unusual problems too. We are hoping that no one will object to the publishing of their hints and suggestions.

I am hoping that we can create some real discussion among Pigeon Members and pep up any who may be losing interest. I have hopes that this column will give you something to talk about in your letters and discuss.

In order to keep these groups on their toes, will all members PLEASE abide by the rule of not holding the letters more than 3 days? This is of importance - any member who continually disregards this, will have to be dropped. It is not fair to those who abide by the rules, to have someone disregard it.

Please be sure that your letters carry enough postage. Again, it is not fair to the one who has to accept the letters with POSTAGE DUE.

Mail the letters in envelopes that are big enough and heavy enough to survive rough handling in the mails. Tape the corners and the flaps down if there is any danger of the envelopes bursting open.

WATCH FOR OUR PIGEON COLUMN IN THE NEXT ISSUE ! ! ! It's up to you Pigeon Members to help make it a really good one.

Sincerely,

Violet Berry

ANSWERS TO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR PLAN OF REGISTRATION

Our Plan of Registration is only just now getting under way in the long and somewhat difficult task of accurately recording by name and authentic description all different varieties of African violets originated in the past, and all different varieties that will be originated in the future. In the performance of a service of this kind it is quite natural that most of the problems to be encountered will arise to confront us at the very outset. Several problems have already arisen and we will attempt to furnish our members with the solution to these problems in the following questions and answers.

QUESTION - How Are So Many Different Varieties Of African Violets To Be Registered?

ANSWER - There are three logical and practical ways for this to be done:

First . . . It is the responsibility and privilege of everyone who originated or discovered a different variety of African violet in the past, and that will originate or discover one in the future, to personally register all such past and future originations.

Second . . . In case the originator does not register his originations within a reasonable length of time, then the commercial grower or dealer who offers them for sale may register for the originator. Commercial growers and dealers must, in all instances, secure the written consent of the originator of a seedling to register it. But mutations (sports) may be registered without the originator's consent.

Third . . . In case neither the originator nor the commercial grower or dealer registers in a reasonable length of time, then any other person who desires to do so may register for the originator. However, as has already been stated, the written consent of the originator of a seedling must, in all instances, be secured.

There are a number of varieties of African violets that have been patented. It is the responsibility and privilege of the patentee, or the person or firm that holds the patent right, to register. If neither the patentee nor the person or firm that holds the patent right registers, then either the commercial grower or dealer who sells them, or anyone else who desires to do so, may register for the patentee.

QUESTION - What Is Meant By Raising An Objection To The Registration Of African Violet?

ANSWER - It is not practical for the Committee on Registration to first see and judge every variety of African violet submitted for registration.

So it is provided in the Code of Rules that govern the operation of the Plan of Registration that, in case anyone knows of any reason why any particular variety of African violet that is submitted for registration should not be registered by the Society, that person may communicate such reason to the Society. In other words, if you personally believe a certain variety should not be registered, and you base your belief on a sound reason - not on hearsay - please immediately write the Committee on Registration fully about the matter. When you do this you are 'Raising an Objection' to the registration of that variety, and properly so.

QUESTION - The varieties Mary Wac and Trilby I purchased from two separate dealers are the same variety. Should both of these be registered under two different names?

ANSWER - No, they should not be so registered. In fact, it is questionable whether either one of these names should be registered. We now believe that this variety was first named Orchid Beauty and should accordingly be registered under that name.

In Volume 2, Number 2, Page 18 of the African Violet Magazine, the Society's Committee on Classification (this committee has since been succeeded by the Committee on Registration) gave an authentic description of Orchid Beauty, accompanied by the following statement. "Orchid Beauty - the most confused of all varieties. Other varieties which are the same, or so similar as to not be distinct, are Orchid Queen - Rosy Blue - Trilby - Orchid Red - Plum - Plum Pink - Mary Wac - Vivid - Vivid Plum - Betty Joe and perhaps many others."

This is the most typical example of duplication of names that we know of. A single variety, Orchid Beauty, also known under ten different other names and perhaps more. It graphically illustrates the critical need for registration of each separate and distinct variety of African violet under one name and authentic description. And this service is now being performed by the Society through its Committee on Registration.

All who are interested in the accurate classification of the different and distinct varieties of African violets, through the operation of our Plan of Registration, are urged to carefully read the Code of Rules that governs the operation of the Plan. A copy of the Code may be secured from the Committee on Registration, 2694 Lenox Rd. N. E. Atlanta 5, Georgia. Further questions and answers regarding other problems encountered in the operation of the Plan of Registration will be published in future issues of The African Violet Magazine.

COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION REPORTS

Registrations Become Permanent

Permanent registrations on all of the following varieties, applications for which were published in Volume 3, Number 2, Page 40, of the African Violet Magazine, became effective February 10, 1950.

BIG MIKE,
by Mrs. Irving R. Furnish.
CUSTARD CUP,
by Mrs. Irving R. Furnish.
BLUE ANGEL,
by Mrs. Irving R. Furnish.
BLUE SNOW,
by Mrs. Homer C. Foltz.
DARK EYES.
by Mrs. Irving R. Furnish.
IONANTHA SUPREME,
by Mrs. Irving R. Furnish.
LADY SLIPPER,
by Mrs. Homer C. Foltz.
LUANA,
by Mrs. Irving R. Furnish.
MARINE,
by Mrs. C. H. Harris.
ORCHID EYES,
by Mr. George P. McFarland.
PRINCESS LEILA,
by Mrs. Velma Davis.
SKY BLUE SUPREME,
by Mrs. Irving R. Furnish.
WHITE GIRL,
by Mrs. Frank Oros.
LADY CATHERINE,
by Mrs. Velma Davis.
LOVE BIRDS,
by Mrs. Homer C. Foltz.
MC FARLAND'S BLUE WARRIOR,
by Mr. George P. McFarland.
MOONGLOW,
by Mrs. Homer C. Foltz.
RIPPLING BLUE,
by Mrs. John C. Doell.

Correction Of A Registration

Mrs. Frank Oros applied for registration of a new variety she desired to name Oros White Girl, and her application was so published in Volume 3, Number 2, Page 40 of the African Violet Magazine. Subsequently, Mr. John Good, of the firm of Good & Reese, Springfield, Ohio, applied for registration of a new variety he desired to name White Girl.

The parentage of Mr. Good's origination was given as (Seedling of Blue Girl x Seedling of White Lady). The parentage of Mrs. Oros origination was given as (Blue Girl x White Ruffles). The description of the color and pattern of foliage and the color of bloom of both these seedlings appears to indicate such similarity as to make it desirable, and certainly less confusing, to permanently record the name of this new White origination as WHITE GIRL; and this correction is so noted in the foregoing list of permanent registrations.

More and more as interested growers of African violets make experimental crosses, using the same or related varieties - as they are certain to do - it may be reasonably expected that results which are correspondingly similar will occur. However, experience thus far indicates that while two selected seedlings from crosses of the same or related varieties, made by two different people in different locations, may be quite similar as to color and pattern of foliage and color of bloom, one of the two varieties may greatly excel in other characteristics such as form of growth, substance and amount of bloom, etc. Because of this the Committee on Registration looks forward to the time when the Society can establish Testing Stations where varieties that appear to closely resemble each other in some characteristics may be grown and observed side by side in different locations, so as to determine by such accredited testing, whether the two or more such varieties differ from each other in other characteristics.

Additional Registrations

Applications for registration of the following additional varieties of African violets were received and recorded during the period from October 1, 1949 to January 17, 1950.

BLUE GIRL SUPREME,
by Mrs. Jennie Spoutz, Detroit, Mich.
December 6, 1949.
CRINKLES,
by Mrs. Paul B. Dissinger, Lancaster, Penn.
October 18, 1949.
FANTASY,
by Behnke Nurseries, Beltsville, Md.
December 5, 1949.
LADY CONSTANCE,
by Behnke Nurseries, Beltsville, Md.
December 5, 1949.
PERIWINKLE,
by Mrs. Jennie Spoutz, Detroit, Mich.
December 6, 1949.
RED DAWN,
by Mrs. James B. Carey, Ft. City, Tenn.
October 28, 1949.
BLUE KNIGHT
by Mrs. Joseph E. Hodan, Clev. Hgts., Ohio.
October 6, 1949.
PURPLE BEAUTY,
by Mrs. James B. Carey, Ft. City, Tenn.
October 28, 1949.
HELEN WILSON,
by Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, Penn.
December 21, 1949.
LANCASTER RED,
by Mrs. C. G. Landis, Lancaster, Penn.
October 6, 1949.

RUFFLED WHITE,
by Good & Reese, Springfield, Ohio.
December 1, 1949.

TINARI'S BLUE FLUTE,
by Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, Penn.
January 17, 1950.

TINARI'S DOUBLE MENTOR BOY,
by Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, Penn.
January 17, 1950.

TINARI'S AMAZON BLUE EYES,
by Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, Penn.
January 17, 1950.

TINARI'S AMERICA,
by Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, Penn.
January 17, 1950.

TINARI'S PURPLE PRINCE SUPREME,
by Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, Penn.
January 17, 1950.

TINARI'S MAMMOTH BLUE,
by Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, Penn.
January 17, 1950.

TINARI'S BLUE EYES,
by Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, Penn.
January 17, 1950.

The applications for registration of these additional varieties are hereby published in accordance with Section 19 of our Code Of Rules For Nomenclature And Registration (Revised) which provides:

"The Committee on Registration will publish all applications for registration in the African Violet Magazine, the official organ of African Violet Society of America, Inc. with notice that objections to be effective must be filed with the Chairman of the Committee on Registration within six weeks of such publication. If no objection is made, registration will become permanent and accordingly so published in a subsequent issue of the African Violet Magazine. In the event of objections to registration, decision will rest with the Executive Committee of the Society."

Anyone desiring to file an objection to the registration of any of the foregoing varieties may do so. All such objections must be adequately detailed in a letter addressed to the Chairman of Committee on Registration, 2694 Lenox Road, N. E. Atlanta 5, Georgia.

REGISTRATION FEES ARE NO LONGER REQUIRED

Shortly after the establishment of our Plan of Registration, which provided for the payment of a $2.00 fee for each variety registered by a member of the Society, and $5.00 for each variety registered by a non-member, it was determined that such required fees appeared to be hindering the registration of both old and new varieties of African violets.

The decision was accordingly made to discontinue on January 1, 1950 that part of the Plan which required payment of registration fees. We therefore gladly notify the entire Membership of the Society that registration fees are no longer required, and that both members and non-members of the Society may now register any and all eligible varieties of African violets with the Society free of any cost whatsoever.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Daisy Jones, Tenn.

What's In A Name? ? ? Oh, you would be surprised at the why and wherefore of some names. Take our African violets for instance.

Delving into the back-ground of names of varieties, I find history, geography, languages, romance, ancestry and many other reasons back of our African violet named varieties. A few years ago Mr. C. J. Hudson, of Atlanta, Georgia, wrote a fine article for Flower Grower Magazine and in it he stated that he hoped the originators of new varieties of African violets would stick to color, otherwise purchasers would not know what color they were securing.

I hope the Committee on Registration will encourage growers of new varieties to name their African violets so that the prospective purchaser will have a clue as to color of their purchase. As an ideal example of proper naming there is Blue Boy Improved, Tinari Blue Eyes, Merkel's Red, Pink Beauty Supreme, White Lady, etc. Other varieties such as Zig, Von Deitrich, Frieda, Admiral, etc. give me no clue as to color by their name.

I am sure that as an African violet lover, interested in all new varieties, it would be a great help to me in selecting the ones that I wish to add to my collection if something about their name gave me a clue as to color of the blossom. I believe the great majority of African violet lovers will share this same feeling with me.

THE SALE

(This one is for fun! Editor)

R. E. Memberthis

We have for consideration the unfortunate case of Mrs. St. John, who raised Saintpaulias.

Mrs. St. John was quite happy and content with her Saintpaulias until one day when she spied the perfect dream of an Easter hat in a Main Stem Millinery Shop. It was about the size and shape of the bowl that held the four inch pot of her favorite White Lady but it was all over lavender and purple violets with miles of pale pink tulle. Mrs. St. John informed Mr. St. John that evening at dinner that she just had to have the hat and, to pay for it, she would sell some of her excess Saintpaulias.

The poor unsuspecting soul ran a modest ad in the classified section of a local paper to wit:-

> African violets. 87 varieties. Many in bloom. The perfect Easter Gift. Modest prices . . .

and followed it with her address. The ad appeared Saturday evening and the first visitor arrived with the first cup of Sunday morning coffee.

The door was opened to reveal the Ardent Collector with a shoe box under one arm and breathless from having run up the front walk.

"My dear, I had to get here before all the good things were gone. I have 196 varieties so I am only interested in new ones. Oh, you're having breakfast!" she exclaimed as she advanced toward the table dragging a chair with her.

"Will you have a cup of coffee with us?"

"My dear, I'd love it", as she pushed all the dishes from her side of the table and placed the shoe box exactly in front of her.

In bewilderment, Mrs. St. John went for another cup and saucer while the Ardent Collector carried on a rapid fire monologue with Mr. St. John. "Do you like violets? My husband just despises them. They're all over my house. It's a mess. I never have room to clean. Three spoons", in answer to "Sugar?" "and plenty of cream. Half and half in fact. I brought you some stuff. Junk mostly, but as you only have 87 varieties - - - ! !"

The coffee was pushed aside and the lid removed from the shoe box with perfect showmanship. A tiny plant in a two inch pot was crowded into one corner and the remainder of the box was filled with small waxed paper bundles. The Ardent Collector removed the plant and placed it in the exact center of the table.

"Do you have this? I call it Sally. Do you know Sally? She gave it to me. Of course, after I had given her my very best plants. I don't know what it is but its lovely . . . Just another blue".

Mrs. St. John could tell that the minute thing was an African violet but, as it was too small to have taken on any characteristics, - - - she didn't know the variety either.

Unwrapping the first bundle, the Ardent Collector held the waxed paper toward the light. "I call this Luscious". Placed the paper with leaf upon it next to the pot of "Sally".

"Looks like Viking to me", said Mrs. St. John, but this comment was ignored as the process of unwrapping and reading was continued.

"This is - - -. My dear, I can't read my own writing. Oh, well, it doesn't matter. My coffee is cold".

Fifteen minutes later the table was respread with waxed paper displaying leaves, in all stages approaching actual demise, with all the flourish of a gem upon a velvet cushion. Mr. St. John had been forced to retreat to the kitchen sink with his cup of coffee.

Fortunately, at this time the Man With A Purpose put in his appearance.

"Violets?"

"Yes".

"Good. I want one for my wife for Easter. She's crazy".

"I beg your pardon".

"Crazy! Puts the blamed things on the breakfast table every morning and talks to them".

"My good man, we all are. What have you in mind?"

"Anything. Don't know a thing about them. Don't care for that matter".

"Here is a lovely Red Head".

"She has it".

"duPont Lavender Pink?"

"She has it".

"Well in that case . . . ! Would you care to look around?"

He would, and did. The trip was hasty and apparently without a glance.

"I'll take that", he said as soon as he saw a lovely Blush Amazon.

"I'll wrap it for you".

"No you don't. I brought a box". The box was carried in from the automobile. It had holes cut into the top - three of them. "Here let me. You will break it up." So the Man With A Purpose took the Amazon and pushed the pot firmly down into the middle hole.

Mrs. St. John took courage in hand and remarked timidly, "You have two more holes".

"Humph. How much?"

"$1.50"

"The florists get $3.00".

"I'm sorry".

"Well in that case, I will take the Plum Satin on the second shelf in the back bedroom and the Rosalie from the far corner of the sun porch".

For a man who doesn't know a thing about African violets ! ! !

Mrs. St. John didn't want to sell the Plum Satin or the Rosalie but the Man With A Purpose had bewildered her beyond reason.

"My dear, you should have soaked him for them", said the Ardent Collector. "Three dollars, he said, at the florists. I certainly would love to have your Merkel's Giant Blue".

"I wouldn't care to part with it. I had such a time getting the plant".

"Well, I didn't really want to part with my leaf from whatcher-ma-callit".

An embarrassing situation was postponed by the arrival of the Bird and the Cynic. The Bird was a dainty little thing who bounced up the walk on the balls of her feet and tiptoed around the house showing her familiarity with wakes and funerals. The Cynic announced as soon as she stepped inside the door, "I am not a bit interested in violets. I only drove her over here. What a mess! How do you ever see outside? They are nice though. What do you feed them? Of course her plants are better than these, and if I had time to waste raising . . . What did you say you fed them?"

"Hyponex. Twice a month".

"I don't believe it. But then you are like all the rest of them. Secrets. Nothing but secrets".

The Bird Oh'ed and Ah'ed quite subduedly, clasping her hands in ecstasy as she stopped before each and every plant and rhapsodized. "Aren't they beautiful? Aren't they beautiful? I just love to look at them. You don't mind if I look, do you?"

About this time the Lady With Consideration arrived; followed closely by the Connoisseur. The Ardent Collector was busy in the kitchen peeling potatoes for dinner.

The Lady With Consideration quietly viewed the plants, both large and small, whenever she could get a peep over the backs of the Bird and the Cynic and was silently making up her mind about her purchases when the Connoisseur arrived.

"I brought my list," said the Connoisseur. "I only want the very newest, or something I do not already have. I want the very best at that - not only good varieties, you understand, but also good plants. But before I waste any of my time - do you have any bugs? No! Good. Then let us sit quietly over here and go over my list. It will save my looking at everything".

The list was hastily checked with the Bird taking in every name and expressing a desire to visit the Connoisseur and take a peep at her plants. The Connoisseur interrupted long enough to comment "No, you don't. Wouldn't have a mess of women tramping through my house for anything in the world."

The Cynic was busy finding the cracks and flaws in the collection of antique glass in the corner-cupboard.

After making numerous mental notes, the Lady With Consideration went her way with the promise to return the next day.

Unfortunately, the only thing Mrs. St. John had to offer the Connoisseur was a separation of her newly acquired Lady Geneva. Quite frankly the Connoisseur told her she could keep it, as it would die anyway - they always did, and left with the parting remark, "Don't know what I expected as I already have the largest collection within five hundred miles".

Finally the Bird decided upon a Red Head with a mere fourteen inch spread and only about forty-six blooms. "How much?"

"$1.50".

"My goodness. I never pay over fifty cents for a plant. Don't you have a small one for fifty cents - or thirty-five?"

Mrs. St. John did and showed her a lovely collection of six for her to make a selection. "Don't you have one in bloom for fifty cents?"

Mrs. St. John parted with the large, blooming Red Head, two leaves from the Lady Geneva and a sucker from Blue Bird, collected her fifty cents, and recounted her prayers as she sat down to the Ardent Collector's dinner. The Cynic's remark that "it wasn't worth $1.50 anyway, as it was broken" still rousing her ire, as she knew that the Bird had pinched the leaves that had made it lopsided.

That afternoon brought only the considerate and friendly type of customer that African violet collectors usually are. That is, until the arrival of the Lady With Opinions who arrived about five. She didn't expect to find anything but one could never tell. She managed to get into the north bedroom that had previously been closed. "What are these?"

"Seedlings".

"Humph! Seedlings. Everyone messing with seedlings. No wonder everything is a mess. Bet you haven't got a decent one in the lot - except those four over there. I'll take them".

"Sorry but they are not for sale. I thought they might be worth something and am propagating to see if they come true".

"Just like all the rest. Never want to sell what a person wants to buy".

"You're like all the rest too", quipped the Ardent Collector. "Never want to buy anything but what we don't want to sell".

The Lady With Opinions trembled violently. "They all look like Orchid Beauties anyway. Don't know why I even gave them a glance. What about the rest of this stuff?"

"You can have any of the others at $1.50".

"Sure. They're not worth a 'tinkers toot' or you wouldn't be selling them. You'd give them a name and push them out on the market. No wonder everything is such a mess. What you should do is throw all of them out, but no, you sell them or give them away; but not to me, I see. Then what happens? Everyone has a new plant and gives it a name. No wonder I'm kept poor as a church mouse trying to keep up with everything. Throw them out, I say - and as long as you are going to, I may as well take these three. They're kind of cute. What's your name? St. John. Good, I'll name them after you - St. John, St. Peter, St. Anne and Sunday Morning. I'll just put them in my box here".

The next thing she wanted was Mrs. St. John's prized duPont Blue #5, her only #4 and Silver Pink.

"Oh, I could not part with them. They are a part of my own collection".

"Nonsense. If you got these you can get more. I mean to have them".

The Lady With Opinions sat herself upon a chair by the front door, looked glum and prepared to wear down Mrs. St. John. The latter lady retreated to the kitchen to confer with her husband. The Ardent Collector kept an eye on the Lady With Opinions, as she expected to see her shove everything into her box that it would hold. Mr. St. John's patience was exhausted; he shouted - for the benefit of the Lady With Opinions - "Soak her five bucks apiece and get her out of here".

The Lady With Opinions was smiling triumphantly and holding out three crumpled five dollar bills when Mrs. St. John returned apologetically.

She left and for the next week told everyone she met that Mr. St. John was a drunkard and beat his wife.

Finally about eleven that night the Ardent Collector left, laden with a huge box under each arm (including the Giant Blue) and a "How nice of you to give me all this stuff, especially as I forgot to bring my pocketbook".

Monday morning about ten the Lady With Consideration returned; bought ten plants and went away without even trying to pump an additional five dollars worth of information and advice free of charge.

GREENHOUSE TIPS

Charlotte Hughes, W. Va.

SHADING-- We began putting a shading compound on the greenhouse in June. The Garland Company, Cleveland, Ohio, puts out a lovely shade of green which we put on the outside. Use one handful of salt in one-half gallon of compound and one gallon of water, let stand over night, then apply with a brush, or, if you wish, spatter it on.

SPRAY-- Using a spray gun, we sprayed our violets all over - underneath the leaves and in the crown with wettable sulphur. Just forget about mites that may be airborne or carried on the hands or clothes of visitors. Sulphur will also kill the little Springtails that worry us so much, but which do no harm.

WATERING-- We use a pistol grip cut-off valve on a ½ inch foot hose with a ¼ inch opening. Reducing city water to 30 pounds with a pressure reducer makes the water run slow enough so as not to injure the roots or wash the soil out of the pot. We water one pot, release the trigger, go on to the next pot. This way there is no water running down our arm and dripping from our elbow.

SPACE SAVER-- For rooting leaves use plant bands placed close together in a flat. We use the fertilized kind. The labels stay in place and they are easy to water and move round. Raise the flat up on boards or coffee cans, place two small electric light bulbs underneath at either end. You don't need a thermometer if the bulbs are small. Remember to take them out when watering.

SEEDLINGS-- Get seedlings out of starting medium as quick as possible. Transplant at six weeks, at which time they should have about four leaves. If left in too long they will stop growing. Even if they are small, transplant and fertilize with some Hyponex. If they are leggy put them deep in mixture.

REPOTTING-- Keep the soil in the pots rather coarse. When the roots and soil get to a fine mass, repot. Plants will then use up fertilizer better. Once a year is about right for me. If water stands around the plant, turn the ball of earth out and rearrange the drainage.

SPECIALIZING IN
AFRICAN VIOLETS
Send For Free Price List
TONKADALE GREENHOUSE
Rt. 3 Box 233 Hopkins, Minn.

"Y-E-S, YOU CAN QUOTE ME!"

Daisy Jones

Thus say our Memphis & Shelby County African Violet Club Members who so obligingly turned in their hints, suggestions and poems at our December quarterly meeting. So, here goes:

Mrs. W. E. Ward, President of our Club gives us:

THE MODEST VIOLET

Though the violet is considered quite modest,
It will toss it's saucy "Red Head"
Shyly wink it's big "Blue Eyes"
Smile very bewitchingly at "Blue Boy"
Often nods her head to "Butterfly"
Raises her eyes to see an "Admiral"
Wears a dress trimmed with "Ruffles"
Often she takes a walk with "Starlight"
Calls the whole world "Gorgeous"
Curtsies low to "White King" and "Orchid Queen"
For she knows the violets are "Supreme".

Mrs. Walter Evans says; "I have found that you can pinch off the little extra crowns that try to start on the main plant (after the crowns have a fairly good start) you can plant these right in your soil mixture, and they will root. Then you have a nice little plant already started with goodsized leaves."

Mrs. Robert Bruce, Chairman of our 1950 African Violet Spring Show suggests: When planting leaves in vermiculite, plant them at a forty-five degree angle . . . more plants will come up.

Mrs. Ethel Bordeaux, one of our enthusiastic club members gives us a poem entitled:

AFRICAN VIOLET ADVICE

For serene loveliness we are agreed,
Tender, patient care is what they need.

From Africa in forests near waterfalls they came
So to fail to provide shade and moisture is a shame.

One third loam; one third peat moss; one third sand
Will give good results and is simply grand.

Another good plan as I have found
Is never, never bury the crown.

When the pot is crowded, make this decision,
Your violet is ready for a division.

Hint on Rooting Leaves turned in by Ruby Ward is:

Place about one inch of prepared potting soil in the bottom of a glass jar, then about two inches of vermiculite on top, stick leaves in to be rooted on an angle, keep soil damp, place cover on jar and place in a north or east window. Plants will soon start from the leaves and with the soil in the bottom of the jar, they will be stronger plants than with just vermiculite.

Mrs. Marie S. Cassidy who personally has recently brought in thirty-one new club members gives us a lovely poem entitled:

THE SAINTPAULIA

A Across the miles of land and sea,
F From Africa there comes to me,
R Rarest of flowers of that great land,
I In many hues and splendor grand.
C Carrying with them their quiet glory
A And whispering to me their sweetest story,
N Nodding their heads in their knowing way,

V Veiling with mystery the things they say.
I I listened intently to hear perchance
O Of the origin of their elegance,
L Leaning close to their pert faces
E Expecting tales from far flung places
T They whispered low with a pious nod, -
S "Saintpaulia's our name, - we come from God."

I believe you will readily agree that we have a very fine club. We certainly are proud of our club membership which now totals 166 paid members besides many honorary members who are invalids, heart patients, etc. Our club is growing in leaps and bounds, believe me.

My suggestion . . . Make our Club Motto "GROWING FOR SHOWING". It should stimulate enthusiasm, encouragement, and ambition by our club members to grow violets they would be proud to show their friends, their neighbors, and to vie in competition with others.

AFRICAN VIOLET LEAVES - - -
Many new and outstanding varieties.
Orders carefully handled and safe delivery guaranteed.
Descriptive list upon request.
MRS. LOUISE TRIBBLE
Fort Payne, Alabama

HUMIDITY IN THE LITTLE GREENHOUSE

Martha Mears, Ind.

When to supply and when to withhold humidity in the small greenhouse is often like the question asked, 'How often should I water my violets?' There is no definite answer to either one; so many conditions in either case are to be considered. You have to do what the experienced grower does with his watering problem, use your head and a lot of common sense; after you do this you will be far along to solving the question yourself. I am not writing from the standpoint of the greenhouse that is equipped with all the modern gadgets that will even register your humidity, but rather from the small one, where the owner will soon learn from experience whether there is humidity in the house or not. You will soon learn by feel or smell alone. When you open the door and enter, dry air should not greet you, but rather that moist, warm air; like springtime in the woods.

There are some times in the year when you should use the hose daily or sometimes more often; and other times when you should be very careful not to add any more moisture than is already in the air.

The two most trying times of the year are in the season of spring and fall rains in our part of the country; this applies to any time of year when there are prolonged rains and the outside air is heavy and full of moisture. This is another time to use a little thought; keep the ventilators open as much as possible, avoid wetting down the walks, do not water your plants or the benches any more than is necessary. Too much humidity will cause leaf rot, crown blight and a number of other minor troubles. If plants are crowded at this time with poor air circulation whole benches of them can be lost. Sometimes a little heat to dry out the house or a fan to circulate the air will help.

There are more times in the year when you will find it necessary to supply additional humidity than to with-hold it. These are the times of drying winds, hot dry days, when heat is turned on in the fall, and those cold, cold days when all out doors is frozen tight.

It just stands to reason that when there is a strong hot wind blowing or a very hot day comes along with the sun pouring down on the earth, that the air is going to absorb all the moisture that it can find and that the greenhouse will not escape. This is the time to be liberal with the hose or watering can. Keep the sand or whatever material you use on the benches moist, spray the foliage of the violets with warm water, hose down the walks, walls and under the benches, several times a day if necessary. Don't open the ventilators any more than is necessary, just enough to keep a good supply of fresh air in the house.

Most plants need a good supply of humidity, especially our violets, and, if nature does not supply it, we must. If the humidity is low, the soil in the pots will dry out much more quickly. We know also that plants get some of their food from the air and it is more readily available from moist air.

The other times that I spoke about were winter. The type of heat that you use in the greenhouse will have a lot to do with your humidity. Steam, hot water heat and open gas stoves will not dry out the air like coal or oil stoves. During most of the winter months the air is moist out of doors and this also keeps the air moist in the greenhouse. Last year I used a coal heater (Warm Morning), this year I am using oil with an electric fan to circulate the heat. This is a very drying type of heat, and I find it necessary to wet down the walks, especially around the stove, almost as often as in the summer. I also keep a large can of water on top of the stove which keeps steaming all the time.

Another time in winter when it may be necessary to supply additional humidity is in prolonged severe frozen periods. All the moisture outside is frozen, even the air is dry, so it is not available to the greenhouse.

Be observing, look at your plants, look at your walks, your walls and take that full deep breath as you open the door. You will soon become wise: whether to add humidity, with-hold it, or let well enough alone.

AUTOMATIC WATERING FOR YOUR AFRICAN VIOLETS

Send 45¢ for one Glaswick, holder saucer and instructions (3 for $1.25) or 50¢ for 3 wicks only - postpaid. Use your own pots. System recommended by Dr. Post of Cornell. Remarkable results.

ATLAS ASBESTOS COMPANY
Box AV North Wales, Pa.

AFRICAN VIOLET
"BLUE GIRL SUPREME"

$2.00 Postpaid

This variety is my own introduction, with midnight-blue giant sized flowers, husky compact foliage heavily scalloped.

Growing Instructions and FREE illustrated African Violet Catalog — Write today!

MRS. JENNIE SPOUTZ
13310 State Fair Detroit 5, Mich.
"African Violets for Beginners & Collectors"

SOIL STERILIZATION

James L. Pointer

PURPOSE

The purpose of this experiment was to find an easy, convenient way to sterilize soil in small quantities for the hobbyist growing potted plants in the home.

PROCEDURE

After taking into consideration the limited facilities the average hobbyist has in the home, it was decided to use four different containers as follows:

Containers	Pounds of soil	Amount of dowfume
1. ½-pint jar	1#	4 drops
2. 1-pint shallow pan	2-3/4#	5 drops
3. 3-pint (sealed pickle jar)	3#	12 drops
4. Garbage can lid	6#	3 cc

(15+ drops = 1 cc)

The garden dowfume was put in the soil at a depth of 1 inch and the surface was moistened with water to prevent a rapid loss of the fumes.

The soil used was from a tomato bed heavily infested with root knot nematodes. The treated soil was left in the respective containers sixteen days, then taken out and put in sterile pots and disease-free tomato plants were set to determine if there were any nematodes remaining in the soil.

After two weeks the plants were taken up and the roots checked for nematode damage. The roots were studied under a microscope, but no trace of nematodes could be found.

CONCLUSION

This is a cheap, easy, simple, and efficient way to sterilize soil, especially where there are limited facilities. The containers could be any discarded bucket, pan, or jar.

Where greater quantities of soil are needed, a lard can or a garbage can could be used to sterilize the soil -- by adding a greater concentration of dowfume.

The soil could be taken from the container as needed and would remain sterile unless re-infested by the user.

Editors Note:— Soil should be aired 2 weeks before using.

AFRICAN VIOLET FLOWER PINS

Ceramics in all colors. $1.50 prepaid.

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Merchantsville 11, N. J.

McFarland's Blue Warrior (Reg.)
Leaf 50¢ - Plant $1.25 & $1.50
according to size (2" pot)
Blue Warrior Supreme leaves
(Very limited quantity) 75¢
25¢ additional for leaf shipping;
50¢ for plants.

GEORGE P. McFARLAND
515 S. Walnut St.
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HOUSE PLANTS

African Violets, Ferns, Ivies, Begonias, Geraniums, Cacti and Succulents, Foliage Plants.

Fertilizer — Hyponex 7 oz. 50¢
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Other Fertilizers, Soils and other items to fill your needs.

N.N.O.R. 6 oz. $1.00, 16 oz. $2.15, Sprayer for insecticide throws hard penetrating spray, $2.25.

If ordering above items separate, add 35¢ for shipping.

Send for fall listing

YOARS HOUSEPLANT NURSERY

Route 1 Bunker Hill, Ind.

NEW AFRICAN VIOLETS

FANTASY Light lavender blossoms, rayed, splashed and dotted with deep purple. Hardly any two blossoms alike. $3.00 each.

LADY CONSTANCE Giant, deep purple blossoms. Beautiful supreme foliage. $3.00 each.

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Terra-Lite* BRAND VERMICULITE PLANT AID

Terra-Lite is reg. T. M. of Zonolite Company, Chicago, Ill.

AFRICAN VIOLETS

Spring list ready about March First.

Write for free copy.

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AFRI-GRO: (New reduced price) Sterilized potting soil, Soilene treated. Generous 4 lb. bag $1.00 Postpaid.

HY-GRO: Modern liquid fertilization at it's best, will not burn. Jar 65¢ Postpaid.

VERMICULITE: New medium for seed starting & rooting leaves, many other uses. Full instructions. 4 Qt. bag $1.00 Postpaid.

CHARCOAL: Pulverized, horticultural grade, for adding to soil, for water-growing plants etc. 1 lb. plastic bag 50¢ Postpaid.

PEAT MOSS: Horticultural grade, soil conditioning and many other uses. 1 lb. plastic bag 40¢ Postpaid.

ELECTRIC PLANT STARTER: Modern, scientific unit for propagating, ideal for starting Violet seeds. Complete with heating unit, thermostat, glass wick waterer, vermiculite, liquid fertilizer. Carries money back guarantee. $10.00 Postpaid.

WIK-FED POTS: 6 pastel colors 4 inch size $1.15 each. 6 for $6.00 Postpaid. New 5 inch size $1.50 each Postpaid.

CARE & CULTURE OF THE AFRICAN VIOLET: New 4th edition by Lloyd P. Lindsey. Very concise & practical booklet. 60¢ each Postpaid.

THE AFRICAN VIOLET: by Helen Van Pelt Wilson. 6th edition, completely revised. A beautiful book every Violet Fan should have. $2.75 Postpaid.

SEND FOR OUR NEW 1950 PRICE LIST.

VIRGINIA LEE GARDENS

DEPT. A GREENSBORO, MD.

$1.00 ea.

Blue Boy
Redhead
Blushing Maiden
Double Duchess.

$1.50 ea.

Fischer's Double Margaret
Fischer's Dark Lavender Double Selection.

Lady Geneva. $2.00

These are specimen plants with multiple crowns, budded but not in flower. Shipped charges prepaid.

FRED G. LEWIS GREENHOUSES

519 Locust St. Lockport, N. Y.

From left to right, Mrs. Harry Moeller, Mrs. E. R. Lotz, Mrs. John Landaker, Mrs. A. B. Cooper and Mrs. Arthur Radtke.

CINCINNATI SHOW

The Queen City African Violet Society of Cincinnati held its first competitive show at the zoo gardens on Sept. 24-25. The show was open to the public from noon until 6 p.m. The register showed visitors from Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, numbering over 3000.

Guest of honor and Judge of the show was Mrs. Earl Mutchner of Richmond, Indiana.

Staging and decoration was beautifully carried out in white, green and violet blue, under the direction of Mrs. Edward Lotz.

Classification of the 77 varieties and 250 plants was graciously handled by our own President, Mrs. Arthur Radtke.

The display of various methods of propagation and soil mixture was very interesting and educational, as was also the free literature, "Violet Culture for the Amateur" furnished by the Cincinnati Post.

Mrs. A. B. Cooper of Covington, Kentucky was chairman of the show.

DOUBLE TROUBLE CONT.

into a prize-winning specimen. As time goes by, and the poor plant gets only what light and fresh air are not absorbed by its lower brothers and sisters, the first thing you know a remark from a husband such as, "Those awful looking doubles! Why don't you throw them out?" is sufficient to cause the poor things to give up the ghost.

Good light and feeding have been stressed in most of these replies. Along with them, I think good ventilation is important, too. Above all, I think perhaps they need to be given a little extra T. L. C.*

And, so, Mary Jones, if this help has not arrived too late, the best of luck and good growing!

* Tender loving care

VIOLETS GROW in new, amazing Syco Bowls

Intensive research has developed the bowls acclaimed at recent AVSA convention. SYCO bowls cut down attention necessary for indoor plants and flowers; exclusive moisture control aids growth. Available in 2 colors and 14 shapes, $1.00 to $3.50. If your florist doesn't stock them write directly to:—

THE SYCOBOWLS CORP.
28 S. Wycombe Ave.
Lansdowne, Pa.

SCHEDULE OF AWARDS – FOURTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

SECTION A

CLASS 1. Newest or best seedling by a non-commercial member.

2. Newest or best sport by a non-commercial member.

3. Newest or best seedling by a commercial grower.

4. Newest or best sport by a commercial grower.

SECTION B

CLASS 1. Local Club displays of specimen plants. Space to be reserved not later than March 31, 1950. Clubs to furnish crepe paper table covering and flower pot covering of own color choice. Suitable Club name cards to be furnished by clubs. First, second and third awards will be given each club display.

CLASS 2. Arrangement using one or more African violet plants or flowers with accessories or other plants. Miniatures included in this class. No entry to cover more space than 20" wide X 18" deep. Reservations for space must be made before March 31, 1950.

CLASS 3. Local club year books.

1. Entries will be limited to members of the African Violet Society of America.
2. Exhibitors will not be allowed in display room during judging period, under penalty of disqualification.
3. The decision of the judges in making awards shall be considered final in all cases. First, second and third prizes shall be given each class, except in class 3.
4. Hostesses will be supplied to furnish protection for exhibits, and to welcome guests.

Reservation for space should be sent to Mrs. R. J. Schadewald, 7 Lexington Ave., Havertown, Pa., Chairman 1950 Convention.

Saintpaulia Growers

629 WEST MATTHEWS AVE. JONESBORO, ARKANSAS

LITERATURE ON REQUEST

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FIRST AID KIT

for

AFRICAN VIOLETS

Brand New! everything you need to control aphids, leaf hoppers, thrips, mealybugs, plant lice, red spider, springtails, cyclamen and African Violet mites. Complete kit consists of OPTOX, one-hand-operated DeVilbiss atomizer, medicine dropper, and SOILENE -- sells for only $2.50 postpaid. Order today; Protect your plants (West of Chicago, add 25¢ for packing, postage) Write for new free circular on African Violets.

$2.50 Postpaid

VIRDANS FARMS

Box 123-L Phelps, New York

POTS FOR AFRICAN VIOLETS

4" "Squatty" Clay Flower Pots, dark red in color and with excellent porosity, are ideal for **AFRICAN VIOLETS.** Has specially treated edges to help prevent sloughing off of leaves. Used by florists for growing violets, and recommended as one of the best for good results. Shipped prepaid parcel post.

4 for $1.00 10 for $2.00

25¢ additional postage west of the Rockies

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SODIUM SELENATE. For Control of mites on African Violets. In Capsules of ¼ gram each, convenient for Extra-Dilute Method of treatment. 12 capsules (enough for about 200 plants) for one dollar, post-paid.

Mrs. Neil C. Miller

Layton's Lake, Penns Grove, N. J.

Mrs. W. R. Sawry of the San Gabriel Society and her prize winning arrangement which won the Sweepstake Award.

SAN GABRIEL SOCIETY

The San Gabriel Valley Chapter of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. met the first part of December for a combined Thanksgiving and Christmas party with gift exchange. Mrs. Nelson P. Walters, First Vice-President and Program Chairman, presented a unique contest for the most beautiful and novel package wrapped as a gift and for table decorations. First place was won by Mrs. Ernest Mackey, President, who also presided at the meeting, second place going to Miss Helen Hellweg, and the special award was won by her mother, Mrs. Anna Hellweg, for her hand carved Santa Claus and sleigh in a Swedish table decoration.

Mrs. Robert Schrecengost, Arcadia, and Mrs. A. H. Anderson, Pasadena, acted as judges for the contest.

Mr. J. J. Littlefield, noted commentator of radio and television, presented on station KXLA Mrs. Ernest Mackey, Mrs. Ernest Ruebels and Mrs. Fred P. George, Temple City. Their topic was African violets and their culture.

This Chapter offered a cash prize of $10.00 to the sweepstake winner in the African violet division at the Temple City Woman's Club recent fall flower show. Mrs. W. R. Sawrey, Temple City, was the winner of this award, winning the Blue Ribbon and also the Special Award. The winning plants were planted in a palm frond in the shape of a canoe about three feet long. Twelve plants of the varieties Blue Boy, Blue Girl and Pink Girl were used in this container.

CLUB NEWS

Maxine Wangberg, Club Editor
1920 W. 3rd St.
Perry, Iowa

McKEESPORT, PENNSYLVANIA

On November 5, 1949 the African Violet Society of McKeesport, Pennsylvania, was formed under the sponsorship of Mrs. Richard L. Fait. Twelve persons were present, 10 ladies and 2 gentlemen. Mrs. Fait explained the purposes of a local society, and also informed those present of the National Organization. After a general discussion, formal organization of the society took place and the following officers were elected:

President,	Mrs. R. L. Fait
Vice-Pres.,	Mrs. W. B. Renshaw
Sec'y. & Treas.,	Mrs. V. A, Leeper

MINNEAPOLIS SAINTPAULIA SOCIETY

In September, 1949, a group of twelve African violet enthusiasts met and formed the Minneapolis Saintpaulia Society. The following officers were elected:

President,	Mrs. Herbert H. Stevens
Vice-Pres.,	Mrs. Laurent Olson
Secretary,	Mrs. Frank Heschmeyer
Program Chm.,	Mrs. Walter Hagen

This Society meets the third Monday of the month, each member taking her turn holding the meetings in her home.

LOS ANGELES SOCIETY

African violets again make television on the West Coast. On October 12, 1949, over KFI National Broadcasting System, Mrs. Clarissa Harris, 1st Vice-pres. of the Los Angeles Chapter of the African Violet Society of America, Inc., and also Regional Director for the West Coast, spoke on African violets and the African Violet Society of America, Inc. She displayed many of her lovely plants, among which was a beautiful specimen plant of Marine, which is her own introduction.

The Los Angeles Chapter held an executive meeting at the home of Mrs. Harris on October 7, 1949. A delicious luncheon was served and plans for the coming year were discussed, among them plans for a Spring Violet Show. Through the efforts of the Los Angeles Garden Center, this Chapter will provide plants to the Sawtell Veterans Hospital. The Veterans wil grow the violets in their hot houses to provide blooming plants for the less fortunate boys who cannot be outside to enjoy them.

The newly elected officers for the year are:

President,	Mrs. Carolyn Rector
1st Vice-Pres.,	Mrs. Clarissa Harris
2nd Vice-Pres.,	Mrs. Mae Ehrhardt
Secretary,	Mrs. Genevieve Marsh
Treasurer,	Miss Nellie Morris
Hostess,	Mrs. Sophia Schultz
Publicity,	Mrs. Edith Mackey

AKRON, OHIO ORGANIZES

On November 8, the newly organized African Violet Society of Akron, Ohio, held its first meeting. The Constitution was approved, and the following officers were elected:

President,	Mrs. Roy Gracy
Vice-Pres.,	Mrs. Earl Millington
Secretary,	Mr. George R. Klewe
Treasurer,	Miss Evelyn Hawk

The present membership of this group is twelve, all members of the National Society.

FORT WAYNE SOCIETY

The Fort Wayne Chapter of the African Violet Society of America was formed October 8, 1949, at the YWCA, with seventeen ladies in attendance. The group selected the name of Neptune for the Club.

Officers elected were:

President,	Mrs. Wm. C. Rhodda
Vice-Pres.,	Mrs. Carl Reckeweg
Rec. Secy.,	Mrs. Lewis Miller
Treasurer,	Mrs. Albert Schonefeld
Corres. Secy.,	Mrs. W . G. Brondt

The group will hold its meeting on the second Tuesday morning of the month.

Each program will have a speaker on a subject pertaining to African Violets, and each member will prepare a three minute talk on her experience with the given subject. A round table discussion will follow.

A grab bag leaf exchange will be one of the features of the next meeting, at which time each member will give a three minute talk explaining how she became interested in African violets.

BEAN CREEK VALLEY CLUB

On October 21, 1949, thirteen African violet fans met at the home of Mrs. Robert Cunningham, Hudson, Mich. Nine of these 13 formed the Bean Creek Valley African Violet Club. All members are members of the National Society.

The following officers were elected for the year.

President,	Mrs. Robert Cunningham
Vice-Pres.,	Mrs. Ruth Ruder
Secretary,	Mrs. John Slivka
Treasurer,	Mrs. Lucille Riley

This most unusual name was chosen by the Club members because Bean Creek has its source in Michigan, ending in Ohio, while the Violet Club has all Michigan members except one who lives in Ohio. Meeting dates are the first Tuesday of each month.

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT CLUB

On November 3, a group of eight African violet fans met to formulate plans for a Club in the Hartford area. On November 29th, the first meeting was held in the home of Mrs. Gilbert Ashley, Wethersfield, Conn., with 26 members present. The Central Connecticut Saintpaulia Club was organized at that time, and the following officers were elected for a period of two years:

President, Mrs. Edward Christ, New Britain, Conn
Vice-Pres., Mrs. F. C. Beekley, West Hartford, Conn.
Secretary, Mrs. Robert J. Dowling, Wethersfield, Conn
Treasurer, Mrs. Fay E. Downer, Canton Center, Conn.

Due to the bad weather of the winter months, this group decided to start with four meetings a year, meeting the second Tuesday in March, May, September, and November.

FLINT AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY

The Flint African Violet Society held its first fall meeting on September 9, 1949, in Ballenger Park, Flint, Michigan.

The following are officers for the year:

President, Mrs. James Atkins
Vice-Pres., Mrs. I. E. Clement
Treasurer, Mrs. James Gardner
Rec. Secy., Mrs. Russell Gordy
Corres. Secy., Mrs. Samuel Thompson

The members' African violet notebooks covering last years activities were judged by Mrs. Ralph Ellsworth and Mrs. Herbert Beavis. Prizes were awarded to Mrs. Thomas Drake and Mrs. Russell Gordy. Mrs. Atkins then gave out new year books to the chairmen of the eight Flint chapters.

After the business session concluded the members enjoyed a basket luncheon.

Following the luncheon, the meeting was opened to all interested people from Flint and surrounding cities. Mrs. I. E. Clement, Vice-President, introduced Prof. C. E. Wildon, head of the Department of Horticulture from Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan, who gave a demonstration lecture on the mixing of soils for the African violet.

WINNIBAGO COUNTY AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB

On September 30, 1949, nine African violet enthusiasts met at the home of Mrs. Allen Rice for the purpose of organizing a local Violet Society.

Constitution and By-laws were drawn up and adopted, and the following officers were elected:

President, Mrs. Allen Rice
Vice-Pres., Mrs. John Donavan
Secretary, Mrs. Elof Carlson
Treasurer, Mrs. Dorothy Lindroth

Meetings for a time will be the third Thursday of each month.

METROPOLITAN AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB

On Saturday and Sunday, November 12 and 13, 1949, the Metropolitan African Violet Club put on an exhibit and sale of Saintpaulias in conjunction with the National Canary Show in Washington, D. C.

The plants were arranged on tables according to color, there being one hundred plants with sixty-four varieties.

Judges were Dr. Freeman Weiss, Pathologist, Beltsville, Maryland, and Mrs. Frank Pochurek, Corresponding Secretary of the National Society, from Cleveland, Ohio.

On other tables smaller plants were for sale and a 10% discount was given to the Treasury of the Club which will help defray expenses of a future show.

GREATER AKRON SOCIETY

The African Violet Society of Greater Akron was organized November 17, 1949. All members of this group are members of the National Society. The officers are:

President, Mrs. E. Pearle Turner
Vice-Pres., Mrs. Harry Baughman
Rec. Secy, Mrs. M. J. Fisher
Corr. Secy., Mrs. Harold Dannemiller
Treasurer, Mrs. John J. Martin

INFORMATION ! !

The following members cannot be located by these addresses. Please help us find them.

Mrs. F. L. Cherney,
106 E. Elm Ave.,
Flandreau, South Carolina.

Mrs. Mildred Snow,
509-A Delmar Ave.,
St. Louis, Mo.

Mrs. Catherine Stephenson,
1611 S. W. Blvd.,
Kansas City 3, Mo.

Dr. Fred A. Heimstra,
8022 W. 29th Place,
North Riverside, Ill.

In Memoriam
Miss Marion Thomas
January 19, 1950

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"JUST THE THING" for African violets.

A trial will cost you but one penny - for a postal card. So send today for your sample, and join the fast-growing SPOONIT CLUB.

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AFRICAN VIOLET EXHIBIT

Visitors Welcome

9 to 3 Monday through Friday

Closed Saturday and Sunday

We are putting on exhibit all of our own varieties that we have for sale and new ones that we intend to introduce in the future and as many of the other people's varieties as we can buy, also.

Anyone having a new variety that they wish put on exhibit we will be glad to buy one plant.

This exhibit has no connection with The African Violet Society or the classifying of the different varieties of African Violets.

This is an educational program to acquaint the people with the different varieties.

We will be open the Saturday and Sunday following the African Violet Show at Philadelphia so you can stop if you are going this way.

R. G. BAXTER GREENHOUSE

2023 BELMONT

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BACK ISSUES OF THE MAGAZINE

Reprints of Volume 1, Numbers 2, 3 and 4 are now available in limited numbers - the cost is 50¢ each post paid. If you want these do order them now as no further reprintings will be made. Volume 1 Number 1 was not reprinted.

Not all back issues of Volume 2 are now in print. Requests for these must be made on penny post card and you will be notified which ones are available.

Orders will be mailed promptly by 3rd Class Mail. Please give your magazines time to reach you before writing in about them. 3rd Class Mail travels more slowly . . .

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Send requests to Alma Wright,
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Knoxville 15, Tenn.

VIOLET LOVERS ATTENTION

Why not be among the first to add the newest creation in African violets to your collection? From our observation, and from the enthusiastic expressions of some of the leading violet growers and magazine editors, who have seen them, we believe we have produced the "QUEEN" of all the African violets - "FISCHER'S FRINGETTE STRAIN".

The FRINGETTE STRAIN is a group of violets whose petals have a delightfully wavy appearance, with a decidedly fringed edge, set off by a bright yellow eye, which makes it a thing of real beauty. It is the result of a single violet crossed with our popular Double, and therefore retains many of the characteristics of the Double, among which are it's longer lasting qualities. To those who like distinctive shades, FRINGETTE comes in beautiful shades of Royal Blue and Dark Blue at $1.50; Red Lavender and Blue Lavender at $2.00; Mauvette Lavender and Pure White at $2.50; or $10.00 for one each of the set of six, which is a saving of $2.00. All plants are out of 2¼" pots and are good, healthy plants.

The FRINGETTE STRAIN is produced by the originators of the famous FISCHER DOUBLE VIOLETS and the popular MY LADY SERIES. We ship to all parts of the country postage prepaid on orders of $5.00, otherwise add ten cents per plant. No C.O.D. orders accepted. Send for our FREE descriptive folder and price-list which contains many other varieties, and information on how to grow African violets successfully in your own home.

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Specializing in Tropical Shade Plants

Episcia coccinea -
Brownish hairy leaves with silvery veins; scarlet flowers $1.00

Episcia cupreata -
Hairy copper-colored leaves; scarlet flowers $1.00

Episcia splendens -
Smooth light green and silver leaves; scarlet flowers $1.50

Episcia chontalensis -
Dark green hairy leaves, large fringed lilac flowers $1.50

These plants are very tropical, so to insure safe arrival we will not start shipping before May 15th.

Orders for $5.00 or over sent insured parcel post;
for smaller order add 50¢.
Write for price list.

R. G. WILSON

Route 2 — Box 594 — Miami, Florida

ATTEND THE 1950 AFRICAN VIOLET CONVENTION!

Sincere wishes to the African Violet Society of America for its greatest success at the 1950 Violet Convention at Philadelphia.

We extend a cordial invitation to our violet friends to visit our greenhouses, located in the picturesque valley of Bethayres, 15 miles N. E. of the center of Philadelphia. One mile west of Route 232 and 1 block north of Route 63. If driving from convention headquarters of the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, take North Broad St. to Jenkintown, turn right at Jenkintown to Bethayres. If coming by train from Philadelphia to our greenhouses in Bethayres, take the West Trenton Local Train at Reading Terminal 12th and Market St. to Bethayres. Train service every hour. Thirty minute run to Bethayres. Taxi service at Bethayres.

It has been a privilege to serve you in the past and we look forward with pleasure to meeting you personally.

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